

THE ECONOMIC HISTORY  
OF ENGLAND

E. Lipson

VOL I THE MIDDLE AGES

*Tenth edition*

II AND III THE AGE OF MERCANTILISM

*Fifth edition*

GREAT BRITAIN  
AND THE EMPIRE

A DISCURSIVE HISTORY

J. A. Williamson, D.Lit.

*Second edition*

ENGLAND  
IN THE  
EIGHTEENTH  
CENTURY

BY  
W. T. SELLEY

M A , M ED , B SC

SECOND EDITION  
With Sixteen Maps

ADAM & CHARLES BLACK  
4, 5 & 6 SOHO SQUARE LONDON W.1



FIRST PUBLISHED 1934  
SECOND EDITION 1949

MADE IN GREAT BRITAIN

## PREFACE

ENGLAND IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY is an attempt to place the chief events of the century in reasonable perspective and to show them as the prelude to the movements for social and political reform and for imperial expansion in the nineteenth century. Details and purely chronological order have had to be subordinated often to the effort to trace the general lines of policy and historical development. In particular, little will be found about campaigns or battles; attention has been given to the causes and results of wars, leaving the description of their incidents to those qualified to deal with military and naval technicalities. The early chapters trace the main lines of political history and policy, while the second half of the book gives a more synthetic treatment of special topics.

The book makes no claim to originality. I have aimed to present an up-to-date statement of historical opinion, incorporating the results of modern research and detailed studies. My debt to standard authorities is large. The footnotes are intended to indicate the authorities I have used and to be an acknowledgment to the authors; the List for Further Reading is merely a guide to the most important and more readily accessible books.

The book has been prepared primarily for students sitting for Higher School Certificate and Intermediate Degree Examinations. As an introduction to their studies it may also be of use to those reading for Honours, yet it should not be too far advanced for the understanding of Matriculation candidates.

I have received willing assistance from many friends and colleagues. In particular I must express my gratitude to Dr. P. H. Box of Birkbeck College, to Dr. J. Walker of the Huddersfield Technical College, and to Mr. J. W. Gough, Fellow of Exeter College, Oxford, who read considerable parts of the book in manuscript. Miss E. Butcher, of the Education Department of Bristol University, gave me valuable criticisms of Chapter VI, and Professor J. H. Clapham read the Appendix at short notice.

To none is my debt greater than to Professor R. B. Mowat, under whose guidance the book was begun and who has given the most valuable criticism and advice throughout. At the same time the responsibility for any errors and deficiencies there may be in the work must rest on my shoulders alone.

W. T. S.

#### NOTE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

The urgent demand at the present time in many schools and some universities for a short account of England in the eighteenth century has encouraged the publishers to print a new edition of this book. Printing and production difficulties have limited severely any revision of the text, but a number of minor amendments have been made. For the same reason it has not been possible to insert footnote references to books and articles which have appeared since the publication of the first edition; these bibliographical references have been added to the short bibliography at the end of the book.

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# ENGLAND IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

## CHAPTER I

### THE REVOLUTION AND THE STRUGGLE WITH LOUIS XIV

SINCE the beginning of the seventeenth century, England had been engaged in a gigantic struggle: the Crown was matched against Parliament, Prerogative was pitted against the Rule of Law, the religious authority of the Crown was opposed to the claims of rival creeds; and groups of the aristocracy and of the rich middle classes were contending for the spoils of political power. The Revolution shifted the centre of authority from the King to Parliament; it reaffirmed the ostracism of the Catholics; it recognised the position of the Anglican Church and allowed certain legal rights to the Nonconformists; it increased the influence of the city of London and the political strength of the landed aristocracy. It led to a century in which political power often meant the selfish enjoyment of the economic rewards of office: yet it established the authority of Parliament and so laid the basis of the transference of political sovereignty from the landed gentry to the people in the nineteenth century. The Revolution was also the turning-point in the struggle against the rising power of France. For over half a century, Europe had watched the steady advancement of Bourbon might and ambition: France had come to represent territorial aggression, unfettered absolutism, and recently, in appearance, militant Catholicism. The completion of the Revolution in England was the first step towards Louis XIV's defeat and the adoption by England of a new attitude to Continental politics.

The Revolution of 1688 the climax to the struggles of the seventeenth century.

William of Orange came to England in response to the

The Revolution effected by a Whig and Tory Coalition.

summons of a Coalition of seven Whig and Tory conspirators. That summons called him to defend the country, its Religion, Liberties and Properties, and had been sent only when the acquittal of the seven Bishops had "brought all Protestants together and bound them into a knot that could not be untied."<sup>1</sup> Those seven Bishops had championed the Tory enthusiasm for the exclusive control of politics by Anglicans, but they had been compelled, not by intention, but by circumstances, to defend the rights of Parliament against the Crown, the Corporation and Test Acts against the Dispensing and Suspending Powers of the King. As defenders of the Anglican Church they were supported by the Tories, as upholders of Parliamentary Law they were favoured by the Whigs; and thus the initial act of the Revolution was accomplished by a Whig and Tory Coalition.

Both parties benefit by the Revolution

The Whigs therefore claimed that the Revolution meant the safeguarding of liberty and the winning of toleration. They succeeded in establishing the powers of Parliament, and in publicly condemning the arbitrary interference of the King in the constitution of the local magistracy and town corporations. They also secured the benefits of the Declarations of Indulgence, granted by Parliament, instead of by the King, and without the suspicion that they were "to be hugged now, that they might the better be squeezed at another time."<sup>2</sup> To the Tories, who made little use of the word liberty, and hated that of toleration, the Revolution meant the maintenance of the position of the Anglican Church; the exclusion of Catholics from politics and from the Universities, in both of which James had endeavoured to place them. The Whigs and Tories were thus united in common hostility to the Catholic James, but their union was an act of necessity, without real foundation; their resistance to James was largely dictated by the fact that his reign meant to both parties exclusion from political and social dominance. To Whigs and Tories the Revolution meant re-entrance to political life: they would have the opportunity

<sup>1</sup> Halifax, cited from Lodge, *Political History*, vol. viii., p. 273.

<sup>2</sup> A Letter to a Dissenter, August, 1687. Cited from *Camb. Mod. Hist.*, vol. v., p. 235.

to secure not only office but also its spoils—sinecures for their families and friends, Government contracts, commercial privileges and ecclesiastical preferments.

The divergent aims of this Coalition of Whigs and Tories were clearly shown when the Convention met on January 22, 1689. James had fled to France, the home of the national enemy. William had made no attempt to prevent his flight but had rather facilitated it, for he was glad to be rid of so burdensome an embarrassment. To settle the succession was then the first necessity.

The Conven-  
tion meets

All parties readily agreed to the exclusion from the throne of Papists; but when it was proposed to declare the throne vacant, serious differences of opinion appeared. Few were ready to recall James without imposing conditions upon him, and, on the other hand, very few were prepared to declare a Republic. Some of the Tories would have retained James as King but would have placed serious restrictions on his power. Others, while accepting the fact of his absence, would have retained his reign in theory by declaring William his Regent. Others were prepared to treat James's flight as an act of abdication, and to accept the current story of the warming-pan to justify their refusal to proclaim his baby son King; they would have proceeded to declare Mary Queen, leaving William without any other authority than that which Mary cared to delegate to him. The Whigs, on the other hand, adopted the theory of contract, maintaining that James had broken the fundamental laws of the Constitution and had forfeited the throne: in their view, therefore, the throne was vacant and the duty of filling it devolved on Parliament. The Tories were seeking to dissociate themselves from rebellion and to maintain their doctrine of non-resistance; they were reluctant to allow any departure from the strict hereditary succession and were anxious not to admit to the people any right of deposing the King. The Whigs would have made the reign of the King conditional upon his good conduct and his ability to satisfy his subjects.

Rival opin-  
ions regard-  
ing the suc-  
cession to  
the throne

Circumstances favoured the Whigs. James had fled to France and showed no great desire either to confess his misdeeds or to return to the turmoil of English politics,

The settle-  
ment of the  
succession



defeated; if he returned, he would return with French support. On the other hand, William was in the kingdom, to insist on religious toleration, a free Parliament and the attachment of England to the European opposition to Louis XIV. He refused either to be Regent for James, or to accept the scheme of those who would declare that James had abdicated, that Mary was Queen and that with her consent he might be her Deputy. Mary refused to allow herself to be treated as a competitor to her husband. Hence, after considerable difficulty, the Whig scheme was so far accepted that the throne was declared vacant, and Mary and William were invited by Parliament to be joint-sovereigns.

The Bill of Rights

Whig love of liberty and Tory affection for the Anglican Church were both partially satisfied when Parliament abolished the Dispensing Power completely, and the Suspending Power as it had lately been exercised, when it dissolved the Ecclesiastical Commission, forbade the maintenance of a standing army in time of peace, and enacted that "Parliament ought to be held frequently."<sup>1</sup> Apart from the imposition of a religious test upon the King and the prohibition of a standing army, there was in the Bill of Rights little that was new, little more than a denunciation of the illegalities of James. No attempt was made to draft a written Constitution. The Bill of Rights was the practical answer to an actual problem, not a statement of the ideal government.

In religion Whigs and Tories accept a compromise

On religious matters there was bound to be some compromise; for, whereas the Whigs demanded for the Dissenters freedom of worship and at least a partial admission to political power, the Tories regarded the Corporation and Test Acts as essential. The Tories believed that only those should share in the government of the nation who would attend the National Church. The inevitable religious compromise was embodied in the Toleration Act (1689),<sup>2</sup> freedom of worship was granted to the Dissenters, but their legal exclusion from politics remained; henceforth only the worship of Catholics, Jews, Unitarians, and Dissenters

<sup>1</sup> See the Act printed in Grant-Robertson, *Select Statutes, Cases and Documents* (6th edition), p 129

<sup>2</sup> See Grant-Robertson, *Select Statutes*, p 123

who refused an oath of allegiance to William, was legally proscribed. The Whigs gained freedom of worship, but the Tories maintained the Corporation and Test Acts. Unfortunately, by rejecting the Comprehension Bill, the Tories prevented an adjustment of rites and tenets, designed to allow the return of Dissenters to the Established Church. On the other hand, the imposition on the clergy of an oath of allegiance to William bore heavily on the extreme Tory adherents of the doctrine of non-resistance, and forced the Primate, six Bishops, and about 400 clergy to resign their benefices and to become Non-Jurors <sup>1</sup>

The moderation of the Revolutionary Settlement was partly due to the imminence of war with France. The relations of the Stewart Kings with France had always been a subject of keen interest to the English nation. Charles I had married a French princess and a Catholic: Charles II had been taken into the pay of the French King: James II was accused of imitating Louis XIV's policy. But the English people remained bitterly hostile to France. French subsidies had frequently enabled Charles II to over-ride restive Parliaments and to keep out of office men whom he disliked: James II's policy of making himself absolute and governing the country by Roman Catholics implied a violent invasion of the political and social power of Whigs and Tories. France was therefore hated because her power was on the side of an absolutist king against Parliament; and to the politicians of the seventeenth century the establishment of the authority of Parliament was the necessary prelude to their accession to power.

But fear of Roman Catholicism deeply affected English opinion. The dread of the Secret Treaty of Dover, the terror of the Popish Plots, the antagonism to James's policy, though often exploited by politicians, were sincere motives of a large number of people. To these it was significant that the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes coincided with the Bloody Assize, that the Pope opposed James and his proposal to promote his Jesuit counsellor, Petre, as he opposed Louis XIV and his Jesuit supporters. Events wore the appear-

A conflict  
with France  
is imminent

Religious  
opposition  
to Louis  
XIV

<sup>1</sup> See Grant-Robertson, *Select Statutes*, p 121

ance of a Catholic pact. In actual fact, no such agreement existed, for James was, above all, obstinately independent.<sup>1</sup> When Louis offered to detain William in Holland by massing French troops on the Dutch border, James declined his assistance, French troops were sent not to the Dutch border but to Cologne, and William was free to sail for England

European  
resistance to  
French am-  
bition

In Europe, Louis was already engaged in a great struggle. The increasing power of France had endangered the Balance of Power in Europe. Louis's determination to gain for France her natural frontiers had led to so many unjust aggressions on the Rhine and in the Pyrenees that against him were arrayed Holland, the Empire and Spain, all allied, since 1686, in the League of Augsburg. Of the opposition to Louis, William was the leader, and of the League he was the engineer. One of his chief motives in interfering with English affairs, and one of the chief reasons for the Dutch allowing him to leave their country for England, was to secure England's alliance against Louis

overcomes  
religious  
differences

This struggle with Louis was predominantly secular. The old religious confederacies had been dissolved; Protestant Holland now headed an alliance of Catholic Powers with the connivance, at least, of the Pope.<sup>2</sup> Though recently the

<sup>1</sup> Early in September Louis supported James fully, warning him of Dutch preparations, threatening William with war in the event of his attacking England and offering a naval alliance to James. To these assistances James was cold, openly asserting that he was under no obligation to France and finally (September 21) authorising his ambassador at The Hague to offer to assist the Dutch to maintain the Treaty of Nymegen against the French. Three days later, in consequence, Louis turned his troops against Cologne, so freeing the Netherlands from further danger. William set sail on October 16, and being driven back by a storm, set sail a second time on November 1, reaching Torbay on November 5. Then James's appeal to Louis for a fleet met with the answer that it could not be ready until the following spring.

<sup>2</sup> Of the quarrel between Louis, His Most Christian King, and the Pope, the head of Catholicism, there were four grounds:

- (a) The assertion of Gallican Liberties, 1682.
- (b) The refusal of Louis to accept the papal abolition of ambassadorial asylum in Rome under which hordes of criminals had sheltered.
- (c) The Pope inclined to win the Protestants by concession, and was therefore opposed to the severity of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes
- (d) Louis and the Pope supported rival candidates to the Electoral Archbishopric of Cologne.

religious motive had entered to a greater extent into Louis's considerations, owing to the influence of Madame de Maintenon and the Jesuits, yet even his ecclesiastical policy was largely dictated by secular interests. The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes was not merely the attack of a Catholic King upon a group of Protestants, but also the attempt of the State to secure unity within its boundaries and to complete the control of national affairs by the central Government. Yet religious fervour was strong in the seventeenth century, and it was both easy and useful for the political opposition to join the religious resistance to France. Thus, in England, political hostility to France became identified with religious opposition to Catholicism.

William had become the leader of the English opposition to James and of the European opposition to Louis. England's power was therefore thrown on to the side of the League of Augsburg, for as Halifax said, "William had taken England on his way to France"<sup>1</sup>. His accession constituted a revolution in English foreign, as well as in English domestic, policy, and was an event as important in Europe as in England. James's imitation of France was replaced by the alliance of William with the Empire (May, 1689), pledged not merely to check France but even to secure the Habsburg claim upon the throne of Spain. Whereas, during the seventeenth century, dynastic connections between England and France had enabled the latter to dominate English foreign policy, after 1688 there ensued a series of wars with France, fought, first for the security of the Protestant Succession in Great Britain and for the Balance of Power in Europe, later for commercial and colonial supremacy, and finally for existence against Napoleon. Of the 126 years

Great Britain joins the European opposition to Louis

The Revolution of 1688 is a revolution of British foreign policy

---

This quarrel was embittered by a feud between the Pope and the Jesuits caused by

- (a) Their opposition to his reform of moral theology, 1679.
- (b) Their support of Louis's assertion of Gallican Liberties
- (c) Their large share of the responsibility for the persecution of the Huguenots and the Revocation.
- (d) Their continued warfare against the Jansenists upon whom the tolerant Pope was inclined to look with favour.

<sup>1</sup> *Camb. Mod. Hist.*, vol v, p. 249.

between 1689 and 1815, fifty-six were spent in war with France.

The attempt  
to restore  
James II  
fails

Of this struggle between England and France, to which the Revolution gave rise, the Wars of the English and Spanish Succession together formed the first phase. "James was lodged at St. Germain as the French candidate for the English throne",<sup>1</sup> supported therefore by French officers, men, and equipment, he landed at Kinsale in April, 1689, and endeavoured to raise the Catholic Irish in his favour. Simultaneously rebellion broke out in Scotland against the new Government. But by the end of 1691 the energy of William and his supporters had reduced both Scotland and Ireland to submission. Meanwhile, the French had been unable, or unwilling, to follow up their victory over the English fleet at Beachy Head (1690) or to carry assistance to James in Ireland; and English command of the seas was restored by the victory at La Hogue (1692).

The League's  
conduct of  
the Euro-  
pean War

Although the Tories who had been in power after the Dissolution of the Convention (1690) had succeeded in saving their own country, they had done little in the European struggle, and the French had had so much the better of fighting in the Netherlands, Savoy and Catalonia, that the submission of Savoy and Spain seemed imminent. Only the advent of the Whigs to power and their execution of financial reforms saved the Allies' position in Europe. The despatch of the English fleet into the Mediterranean, where her men-of-war had very rarely been seen since the time of Cromwell, was decisive in saving Barcelona, and in keeping Spain and Savoy attached to the League. Warmer support also enabled William not merely to hold his own in the Netherlands, but even to retake Namur, whilst the Emperor also, freed from the Turkish danger, was at last able to render valuable assistance.

Peace agita-  
tion in  
England.

The agitation of the new Tory party, led by Harley, Foley, and Clarges in their attack upon large armies and heavy taxes, and the anxiety of both Louis and William to settle the questions of the Spanish Succession, secured to Europe a breathing-space but no permanent peace. The

<sup>1</sup> Trevelyan, *England under Stuarts*, p. 445.

agitation of the Tories was supported by the fact that exports had fallen by thirty per cent. between 1688 and 1696; shipping had suffered tremendously, and taxation had increased rapidly. By the Treaty of Ryswick (1697) Louis recognised William's right to the English throne; promised never to acknowledge as King either James or his children; restored all the conquests made by France since the Treaty of Nymegen (1678); allowed the Dutch to garrison certain frontier towns as a Barrier, and granted them considerable trade concessions.

The Treaty  
of Ryswick,  
1697

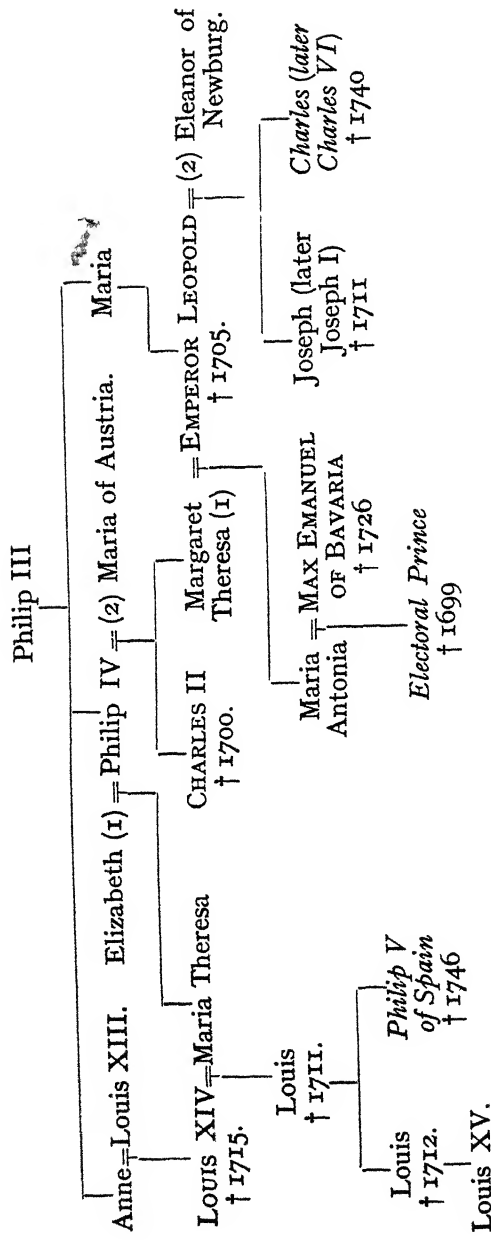
Louis and William had made this Peace to be free to deal with the difficulties of the Spanish Succession. Charles II of Spain, who had deluded Europe by avoiding the grave for over thirty-nine years, was hastening at last to his end. Almost from birth he had been deformed in body and weak in mind: in life he was eccentric and abnormal, and many of his habits were squalid and repulsive. He was ignorant and superstitious. He had no heirs to succeed him, it was too late to hope for issue, and his nearest relations were inconveniently allied to the leading houses of Europe. His half-sister had married Louis XIV; his aunt had been the Emperor Leopold's mother, and his sister the same Emperor's first wife. Louis XIV, therefore, advanced the claims of his younger grandson, the Emperor, on the basis of his descent from the Infanta Maria, pressed those of his younger son.<sup>1</sup> The third candidate was the Electoral Prince of Bavaria, a grandson of the Emperor by his first marriage, a mere boy of delicate health who was shortly to succumb to an attack of smallpox. Louis never supported the claims of his son or elder grandson, nor the Emperor those of his elder son; for to have sought the whole of the Spanish Dominions for a prince in the line of direct succession to the thrones of either France or the Empire would have alienated the rest of Europe.

The prob-  
lems of the  
Spanish Suc-  
cession

The three  
rival claim-  
ants

If either France or the Empire gained possession of the

<sup>1</sup> This claim the Emperor had strengthened by inducing his niece, Maria Antonia, to transfer her rights to the Spanish inheritance to himself: but the validity of such a resignation was doubtful, and certainly did not exclude the claim of Maria Antonia's son, the Electoral Prince.



### THE SPANISH SUCCESSION

The three claimants to the Spanish inheritance are printed in *italic*; the chief figures connected with the struggle for the succession in capitals.

Under the Partition Treaties of 1698 and 1700, which were the work of Louis XIV and William III, the French beneficiary was the Dauphin Louis, but by the will of Charles II the Spanish Dominions were bequeathed to the Dauphin's younger son, Philip

Spanish Dominions the Balance of Power in Europe would be seriously upset and the position of the Maritime Powers, England and Holland, would be seriously menaced. The rivalry of Louis and the Emperor was so keen that either would have preferred to have risked the issue in war rather than see the other seated on the Spanish throne. Neither would admit the claims of the Electoral Prince to the entire inheritance. Therefore the only means of preserving the peace of Europe was to partition the Spanish Dominions between the claimants. Of this course, William was the most ardent advocate, and it was to secure Louis's adherence to his schemes that he had concluded the Treaty of Ryswick.

The objects  
of the Par-  
tition  
Schemes

With Louis he drew up the two Partition Treaties of 1698 and 1700.<sup>1</sup> but neither proved satisfactory. Charles II gave no support to these schemes, and the Spanish people certainly would not have accepted the dismemberment of their Empire; Austria was not satisfied even with the large allotment made to the Archduke by the Second Partition Treaty: finally, it was always doubtful how long Louis would abide by the Partition Treaties which he had signed. The First Partition Treaty was still more unfortunate in that it settled the bulk of the inheritance on the Electoral Prince, who died before Charles in 1699. These Treaties were more severely criticised even than Charles II's will which bequeathed the whole Spanish Empire to Louis's grandson.<sup>2</sup> This will Louis accepted, preferring to take the whole of the Spanish Dominions for his younger grandson, whose

The Parti-  
tion Treaties

Louis  
accepts the  
will of  
Charles II

<sup>1</sup> In 1668 Louis and the Emperor had agreed to a Partition Treaty and in 1689 William had guaranteed the whole of the Spanish Dominions to the Empire, so that the Treaty of 1698 is not strictly the First Partition Treaty, though commonly so named.

Note also that whilst Louis claimed the whole Spanish inheritance—this he did secretly at Madrid—he did so to gain it as a possession separate from France for his younger grandson, but when the inheritance was to be partitioned he insisted that the French share of the spoils should pass into the hands of the Dauphin and be eventually incorporated in the Kingdom of France. By accepting the will of Charles II in 1700, Louis submitted to the former alternative.

(For valuable help and criticism on these points I am indebted to Professor A. F. Hattersley.)

<sup>2</sup> See *History*, vol. xii., January, 1928, "The Spanish Succession," Sir R. Lodge.



succession to the French throne was only a distant possibility, rather than to contend with at least Spain and Austria for the lands which the Second Partition Treaty would have incorporated in the Kingdom of France.

The will  
arouses little  
opposition.

Sensational as was the will, none opposed it except the Emperor, who could have done little alone. Europe calmly submitted to the dominance of France in the Old World and in the New. Even William, who had concluded the Peace of Ryswick, and spent three years over the Partition Treaties to prevent the union of Spain and France, felt acceptance of the will to be inevitable. Louis's chief enemy was himself. He declared that Philip was not debarred from wearing the crown of France as well as that of Spain, and affirmed that "the French and Spanish nations were so united that they would henceforth be only one."<sup>1</sup>

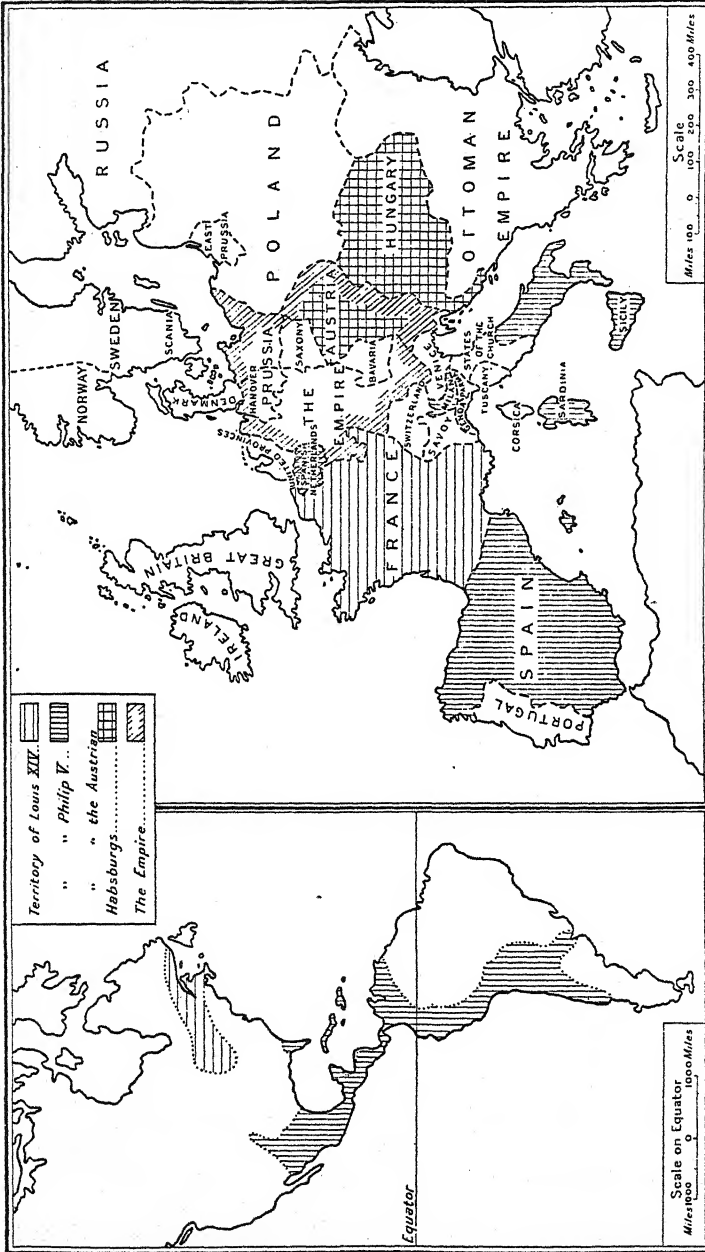
Louis pro-  
vokes a war.

Not content with defying the opinion of Europe, he began to distribute his affronts to individual countries. He seized many of the Dutch barrier towns, including Luxemburg, Mons and Namur, and showed how completely he controlled Spanish affairs by sending French soldiers to garrison the frontier of the Spanish Netherlands. England found her commerce menaced; for Gibraltar, Naples, and Sicily<sup>2</sup> would pass into the hands of a French prince and French influence on the shores of the Mediterranean would become supreme. Louis made commercial treaties with Spain, securing the monopoly of the slave trade with the Spanish colonies for the French Guinea Company and special privileges for French traders; and he undertook to suppress the illicit trade between England and the Spanish colonies. Heavy duties were also imposed upon British goods entering France: the English woollen trade in Central Europe and in the Mediterranean was imperilled, and those interested in it became foremost in the agitation for war with France. England, Holland and Austria had already formed a Triple Alliance when Louis, at James II's deathbed, trampled upon the Treaty of Ryswick, acknowledged James's son as rightful King of England, and rendered the outbreak of war inevitable

Louis XIV  
acknow-  
ledges James  
as King of  
England.

<sup>1</sup> De Flasjon, *Histoire de la Diplomatie Française*, vol. iv., p. 203.

<sup>2</sup> Louis immediately fortified Port Mahon and Gibraltar.



THE WILL OF CHARLES II



(September, 1701). Public opinion in England immediately burst into anger against Louis's insults, so that the Tories were returned to power, only on the understanding that war should be declared forthwith. In the hour of this triumph of his policy William died, and the continuation of his designs fell into the hands of Marlborough

The war opened in 1702, and while Godolphin and Marlborough were in power, supported, first by Tories and then by Whigs, British arms secured a series of brilliant victories, and there was no time when England allowed home affairs to paralyse her action abroad. Godolphin was known as the Treasurer, for he had acquired a knowledge of national administration which won for him a place in the counsels successively of Charles II, James II, William and Anne. He was sufficiently bound neither to party policy nor a religious creed to make it difficult to serve under all these sovereigns. He had become a Government official whose fidelity was easily secured and whose ability was highly valued. He was connected with Marlborough by the marriage of the latter's daughter to his eldest son.

British attention concentrated on the War

So well had the work of the previous war been done, that the Pretender was unable to set foot on English soil and the French, apart from a feeble effort in 1708, could not even attempt an attack upon English coasts. During the early stages of the War (1702-3), while Marlborough was successful in the Netherlands and on the lower Rhine, Prince Eugène was fully occupied in Italy, and the French advanced on Vienna. Only the selfish expedition of the Elector of Bavaria and the success of Eugène in keeping Vendôme in Italy saved the city.

The early campaigns

In 1704 the Austrian capital was again in great peril, and if it had fallen, the Coalition might easily have disintegrated. By a daring march, and his ability to hoodwink friend and foe alike, Marlborough placed himself between the French and Vienna. Here his generalship and resource and the loyal support of Eugène enabled him to win the Battle of Blenheim. Not merely did he slay 14,000 Frenchmen, take 11,000 prisoners and 100 guns,<sup>1</sup> and lay French prestige in

The Battle of Blenheim

<sup>1</sup> *Camb. Mod. Hist.*, vol. v., p. 411.

dust, but he saved Vienna and the Coalition. This was the real significance of Blenheim.

The part  
played by  
the British  
navy.

The Methuen  
Treaty

Meanwhile the English fleet had rendered sound service, for though Sir George Roche failed to take Cadiz, yet his impressive capture of the treasure fleet at Vigo Bay, together with Shovell's imprisonment of the French fleet in Toulon, encouraged Portugal to abandon France and to join the Coalition. After the signing of the first two Methuen Treaties, Lisbon became a base of attack on Spain, and the alliance with Portugal facilitated the proclamation of Archduke Charles as King in Spain. By the third Methuen Treaty, signed seven months later between England and Portugal, English cloth was given a monopoly of the Portuguese market, and in return the better French wines were practically excluded from England in favour of their Portuguese rivals.<sup>1</sup> The fleet also in 1704 captured and held Gibraltar; and by its victory at Malaga, in the only conflict of the whole war between the main battle fleets, made England's control of the Mediterranean indisputable.

The later  
campaigns

Between 1704-8, while Marlborough added to his own laurels and strengthened the position of the Allies by winning the great battles of Ramillies and Oudenarde, his Dutch allies showed their unwillingness, and the German allies their inability, to deal with their opponents. Marlborough was prevented from acting with the energy he wished to employ by Dutch fear for their frontier. As he himself said, he found "much more obstructions from friends than from enemies," yet he dared "not show his resentment for fear of too much alarming the Dutch."<sup>2</sup> Consequently the German allies were continually being defeated and forced to retreat on the Rhine, whilst Eugène's personal bravery and ability alone were responsible for his defeat of the French near Turin (1706) and for the French evacuation of Northern Italy. The victories at Ramillies and Oudenarde were important, not merely because they led to the Allied occupation of further territory in the Netherlands, but also because,

<sup>1</sup> See *History*, vol. xviii, No. 69, April, 1933 "The Methuen Treaties of 1703," Sir R. Lodge

<sup>2</sup> Stanhope, *Life of Queen Anne*, p. 184

by compelling the French to concentrate their forces in the Netherlands at the expense of the contingents elsewhere, they enabled the German Allies at least to occupy the attention of their opponents.

The English fleet meanwhile had saved Barcelona, forced the French to sink their ships at Toulon, captured Port Mahon and defeated the French attempt to invade Scotland. In Spain the daring Peterborough easily occupied Catalonia and Valencia, and even entered Madrid. Unfortunately territory lightly won was soon lost. Philip could be defeated without difficulty, but never crushed. He re-captured Madrid (1707) and inflicted a heavy defeat at Almanza upon Galway, a French Huguenot general who had entered the service of William and who had now been given a command in Portugal.

The attempt to establish the Archduke on the throne of Spain fails

In 1709 Louis offered terms more favourable than those ultimately arranged at Utrecht; but the Allies, occupying practically all the Netherlands except Mons and Luxemburg, having driven the French from Italy and having a fleet in undisputed control of the Mediterranean, arrogantly rejected them. When Louis offered to surrender his grandson's claims to the Spanish Dominions, to recognise the Hanoverian Succession, to grant commercial privileges to England and Holland, and to cede to the Dutch a strong "barrier," the Allies demanded further that he should be responsible for the expulsion of his grandson from Spain. So unreasonable a demand met with a categorical refusal, and the selfishness of the Emperor and of the Dutch, the bloodthirstiness of the Whigs, and the inactivity of Marlborough, plunged Europe into three years of unnecessary warfare. But Whig pugnacity ruined the party, they bought the continued support of the Dutch with a Barrier Treaty which surrendered too large a share of the fruits of England's victory to Holland, and they were consequently overthrown.

The Allies refuse Louis's offer of terms, 1709

Louis appealed not to the aggressiveness but to the loyalty and patriotism of his people, and re-entered the war with their enthusiastic support, while the Allies took the field demoralised by success and the petty jealousies which success had bred. Marlborough gave one last evidence of

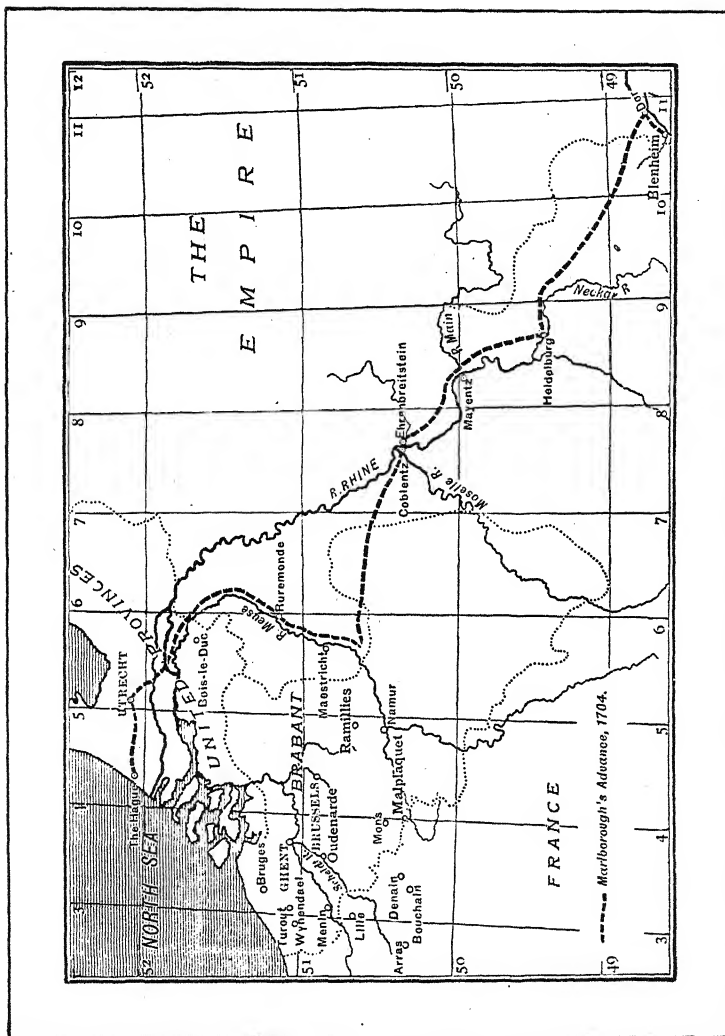
The last stages of the War

his genius when he won the great, though costly, victory of Malplaquet, reduced Mons, and occupied the line of the Scheldt. But the day of Marlborough's supremacy was past: his Whig supporters had been dismissed; his beloved duchess no longer controlled the Queen, his enemies, the Tory pacifists, were in power and Harley was now First Minister. Marlborough had no adequate support and dared not risk any decisive battle, lest some defeat should complete his overthrow. In 1711 the Emperor died and the Archduke for whom the Allies were fighting succeeded to the Austrian throne and to the Empire. Now therefore an Allied victory could only result in the establishment of an Austrian ruler upon the Spanish throne and the union of the Spanish with the Austrian dominions. This would upset the Balance of Power in Europe as seriously as the union of France and Spain, and terms with France could be little worse than the rule of the Archduke over the Austrian and Spanish Empires. England was therefore resolved to end the war. Peace was not concluded until 1713, but war was waged only desultorily and English troops were withdrawn in 1712. In Spain the Allies again occupied Madrid, only to be reminded that they could never impose the claims of Charles upon a people which resolutely held to Philip

The Treaty  
of Utrecht  
safeguards  
Great  
Britain's  
interests,

England and the Dutch made their Peace with France at Utrecht in 1713 and the Emperor signed the Treaty of Rastadt the next year. England gained practically all she had fought for, except the expulsion of Philip from the Spanish throne. She had fought "to reduce the exorbitant power of France and to give a balance to Europe."<sup>1</sup> Now, not only had Spain to cede the Spanish Netherlands, the Spanish possessions in Northern Italy and Naples to Austria, Sicily to Savoy, and a strong Barrier to Holland, but the Treaty prescribed that the crowns of France and Spain should never be united. The prestige of France lay buried on the fields of Blenheim, Ramillies, Oudenarde, and Malplaquet; her resources were exhausted and the war had begun the bankruptcy of her political and social system. England

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Burnet to Duchess of Marlborough, August 12, 1704. Cited from Trevelyan, *Select Documents for Anne's Reign*, p. 167.



MARLBOROUGH'S CAMPAIGNS, 1702-1714





had fought for her liberty and her religion and she had succeeded, Marlborough had written that if France was victorious, "we should not only lose our liberty but our religion also must be forced",<sup>1</sup> in defeating France he had saved Liberty and Protestantism.

England had defended the Revolutionary Settlement, and now she forced Louis to recognise the Hanoverian Succession By maintaining the Act of Settlement, she continued the exile of the Stewarts and the exclusion of French influence from English policy. The rights of Parliament and the power of the moneyed classes were secured. The war created a greater number of posts in the services, fresh calls for naval and military supplies, and new opportunities for the profitable investment of capital in Government funds All these were rewards for those who could secure office The war had therefore strengthened the adherence of the investors to the Revolutionary Settlement and deepened their hostility to the Stewarts and to France.

supplements  
the work of  
the Revolution,

England had also fought for her trade, her control of the Mediterranean, and her position in the New World She now secured the Assiento—the right to supply Spanish America with slaves—the abolition of all French preference in Spanish trade, and the cession of the Hudson Bay Territory and of Nova Scotia. The promise of the demolition of Dunkirk fortifications was intended to establish English control of the Narrow Seas, the acquisition of Gibraltar and of Port Mahon guaranteed her position in the Mediterranean and the security of her trade with the Levant; and the control of the Netherlands by Austria satisfied the demands of England's Rhine commerce The independence of the Netherlands was essential to England's trade with Central Europe, for it controlled the routes to Germany, Britain's best market for woollen and East Indian goods<sup>2</sup> The Assiento Treaty was welcomed by the mercantile interests The French attempt to exclude English merchants from trading with Spanish America was defeated and a strictly

guarantees  
Britain's  
commercial  
position

<sup>1</sup> Marlborough to the Duchess, June 10, 1703 Cited from Trevelyan, *Select Documents*, p. 155

<sup>2</sup> Dietz, *Political and Social History of England*

limited trade had been legally opened to England. In North America, the rivalry of France and England, which was to continue through the greater part of the eighteenth century had already begun, and England's gains by the Treaty of Utrecht were therefore valuable in providing for the extension of her power and commerce there

The causes  
of Britain's  
success

The defeat of France, which the Peace of Utrecht recognised, was of paramount importance, not merely to England but also to the rest of Europe. It had cost England almost a quarter of a century of warfare, and though the Tories were responsible for the conclusion of the Peace, their triumph was clearly founded upon the Revolutionary Settlement which the Whigs had done so much to effect. For her victory, England had to thank, firstly, the ability of William and Marlborough; secondly, her Whig financiers; and lastly, her navy.

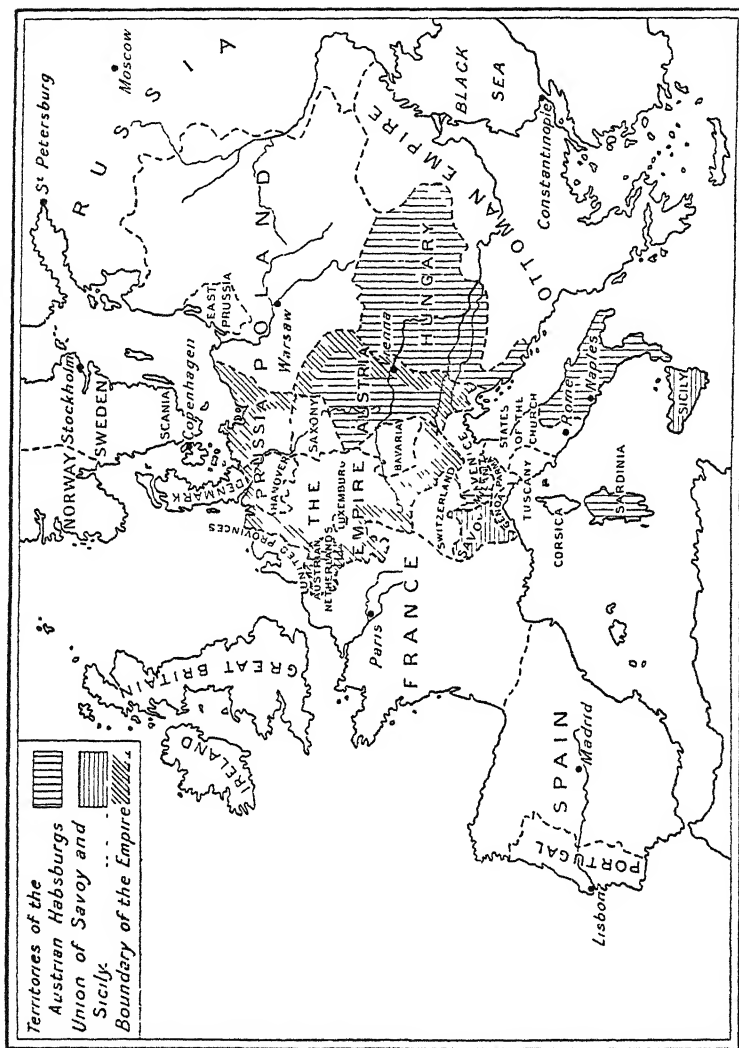
1. The  
ability of  
William III.

William, the King with a short, almost diminutive figure, brown hair, "bright and sparkling eyes," which flashed with keen insight and sound ability, and "a Roman eagle nose," the man of few words and still fewer compliments, who continually hid his passions beneath a frigid exterior, stoical wit, and a taciturn habit, was neither a great soldier nor brilliant general. Further, he was generally disliked by his English subjects, for whom he did so much. Nevertheless, he was responsible for that revolution in English foreign policy which led to the triumph of the League over France, and he could both hold the European Coalition together and manipulate English party politics for the benefit of her interests abroad.

and the  
greatness  
of Marl-  
borough.

On his death his policy was continued and developed by Marlborough. The son of a Devon Royalist, he had strong attachments to the Stewart House and military experience almost continuous from youth, including considerable service in Holland. His marriage to Sarah Jennings in 1675, and his promotion to a peerage in 1682 had set him on the highroad to political eminence. Some might criticise his affection for his Duchess which made his chief interest in Blenheim that "good success would in all likelihood give

His faults



EUROPE IN 1714



him the happiness of ending his days with her,"<sup>1</sup> and which induced him to "throw himself down upon his knees" before the Queen, pleading for her continued favour to the Duchess.<sup>2</sup> Some might dislike to hear the hero complain of the pamphleteers' "villainous way of printing which stabs me to the heart,"<sup>3</sup> and many would dislike his niggardliness.<sup>4</sup>

Notwithstanding his faults, he was undoubtedly both a great statesman and a great general. He realised, as had William, the necessity of placing limits to French aggression, and maintaining the European Coalition. He fought Blenheim to save Vienna and to preserve the alliance of England with Austria, for Europe, as much as for England, he used all his resources as a diplomat, making a journey to The Hague to re-confirm the Alliance in 1702, endeavouring to secure the assistance of Venice and Genoa for Prince Eugène (1706), travelling to Saxony (1707) to cast his glamour over Charles XII and to induce him not to attack Austria. He visited the Elector of Hanover the next year to soothe his jealousy of Eugène, and supported the restoration of provincial rights to the states of Flanders, that, under the sovereignty of the Archduke, they might form an effective buffer against France. To preserve the unity of the Coalition he even declined the Emperor's proposal to nominate him as Governor of the Netherlands, lest his power should alarm the Dutch.

His greatness as a diplomat

Partly by the influence of the Duchess, Marlborough controlled the Queen and induced her to use her influence to subordinate home politics to the needs of the war: this the history of the Occasional Conformity Bills proved. With considerable exaggeration the Duchess claimed that without her "approbation, at least, neither places, nor pensions nor honours were bestowed by the Crown."<sup>5</sup>

His influence on British domestic policy.

<sup>1</sup> Marlborough to the Duchess, June 18, 1704, from Trevelyan, *Select Documents*, p. 161.

<sup>2</sup> Stanhope, *Reign of Queen Anne*, p. 467.

<sup>3</sup> April 6, 1711, *ibid.*, p. 553.

<sup>4</sup> On one occasion Peterborough, being mistaken for Marlborough, replied "I can convince you by two reasons that I am not the Duke of Marlborough. In the first place I have but five guineas in my pocket, and in the second place, here they are, much at your service." Stanhope, *Reign of Queen Anne*, p. 73.

<sup>5</sup> Conduct of the Duchess, Trevelyan, *Select Documents*, p. 198.

Certainly Marlborough and Godolphin, with the resources of the Queen at their disposal, were able to manœuvre in the Houses so that the prosecution of the war from 1702-10 could proceed unhindered

His greatness as a general

Finally, Marlborough, a far greater general than William, had a genius for the direction of a campaign, for the winning of a battle, and for the reaping of the full fruits of victory. He possessed outstanding skill as a commander of artillery; he showed sympathy and good-will towards his men, and careful consideration for their welfare and comfort, by "the magic of his personality" he won their "boundless confidence and devotion"<sup>1</sup> To his military skill, Marlborough added a sound appreciation of the value of sea power, of which, perhaps, William had had but glimpses. Marlborough had learned the strategic possibilities of a fleet in command of the Mediterranean, and it was from him that proceeded the plan for the co-operation of the fleet with the land forces in the capture of Toulon (1706), the similar proposal of 1710, and the design to take Minorca (1708). Marlborough was the sound foreign minister and general of the Revolution, inheriting the national hatred of France, the firm belief in the necessity for a European Coalition, waging an effective continental war, he was able to concentrate the re-organised forces and energies of Revolutionary England on the task of crushing France. It has been said that he possessed "transcendent ability as a general, statesman, diplomatist, and an administrator."<sup>2</sup>

2 The Whig organisation of the finances of the country.

Even the ability and statesmanship of William and Marlborough, however, would have been of little avail had not the financial resources of the country been fostered and organised by the Whigs, particularly by Somers and Montague. The War severely tested the financial strength of the country, and the result indicated the wealth of the English moneyed classes, who fully supported the war policy of the Government. They were glad to become the creditors of the nation to their own profit. Money was required for

<sup>1</sup> Fortescue, *Hist. of Brit. Army*, vol. i., pp. 588-90.

<sup>2</sup> Fortescue, *Hist. of Brit. Army*, vol. 1, p. 588. See also Fortescue, *Marlborough* (published by Peter Davies, Ltd., 1932).

the conduct of the war, and the City financiers found a welcome opportunity to invest their money with security and the prospect of attractive profits. Their wealth became the basis of the nation's success, but in return for their assistance they received high rewards.

The Financial Revolution which the Whigs effected (1694-6) was dictated almost entirely by the exigencies of the War of the English Succession, and played no small part in the ultimate success of England and her Allies. For the effective waging of war, there were two outstanding needs: the first, that the King should be able to obtain ready money at a moment's notice; the second, that the money raised in England should be easily exchanged at low rates by foreign countries where British armies were fighting. The first need demanded the foundation of the National Bank and the establishment of the National Debt, the second called for the Re-coinage.

The Financial Revolution.

Owing to the inability of Charles II and James II to pay interest, or even to give a prospect of repayment to the goldsmiths, these were themselves unwilling to make advances to the Government, and were forced by their clients to refuse to do so. For such loans as they did make, they naturally charged exorbitant rates of interest. The difficulty which consequently continually harassed the Government was removed only when the Bank was founded (1694), to make advances without delay and at the comparatively low rate of interest of 8 per cent. The work of founding the Bank was carried through by Montague, according to the plan of a Scotsman, William Paterson: like other financial reforms, the scheme was influenced considerably by the successful financial expedients which had been adopted in Holland. The initial advance made by the Bank formed the nucleus of the National Debt. This allowed the Government to obtain loans and to postpone indefinitely the repayment of principal, without injuring its credit.

The foundation of the Bank of England, 1694.

The National Debt.

But a supply of money in London was of little value if it lost half or a third of its value on being transported for payment to the armies abroad. This difficulty had arisen

The Re-coinage, 1696.



because, notwithstanding the heavy penalties upon the clipping of silver and upon the buying of clippings, bags of silver were still found to contain only half their true weight. Consequently the Government took in hand the re-coinage (1696), and completed it in four years at a cost of two and a half millions.

3. The activities of the British fleet.

The resumption of the policy of keeping a fleet in the Mediterranean was the third decisive factor in the British success. The navy was able not merely to maintain communications with the Allied forces in Europe, and, by patrolling the Channel, to protect the trade of the country, but also, after 1694, to take the offensive with immediate success. So great was the success of the navy in the War of the English Succession that at no subsequent time in this period was England in any serious danger of invasion.

The Union with Scotland dictated by the needs of the War

One by-product of the War—the Union with Scotland—must be particularly noticed. On the one hand, this was the strategic movement of the English politicians to prevent France from rousing Scottish discontent, on the other, it was the reply of the Whigs to the refusal of the Scots to pledge themselves to the Hanoverian Succession, with which the overthrow of France was clearly connected. Many years of tactful administration were needed before the Union won the confidence of the Scottish people, but it was immediately a successful measure of defence against France.

The Whig becomes the war party and the Tory the peace party.

The course of the War greatly influenced the fortunes of the Whigs and the Tories. On the eve of the outbreak of war, they had been forced to submit to a political and religious compromise, which to neither party was finally satisfactory. The Whig became the War party and the Tory the Peace party. Tory squires and parsons were the chief opponents of the continental warfare, believing that "our true interests required that we should take few engagements on the Continent and never those of making a land war."<sup>1</sup> As strict monarchists and High Churchmen, they hated to be found on the side of republican Calvinistic Holland; remembering the rule of Cromwell, they feared a

<sup>1</sup> Bolingbroke, *Marchmont Papers*, II., 314. Cited from Lecky, *History of England in Eighteenth Century*, I., 242.

standing army; and living, for the most part, inland, they had little interest in continental affairs. Their attitude was determined largely by their knowledge that war necessitated heavy taxation, which fell chiefly upon themselves, as the principal landowners, and that war cast the Government into greater dependence upon the Whig moneyed classes which were in a position to supply its needs. The Whigs, on the other hand, were the supporters of William's desire for war with France, and came into power in the periods when their services were essential to the success of British arms abroad. As business men, they hated the attempt of France to control the Netherlands and the Mediterranean, and appreciated the necessity of preventing the Spanish Colonies from falling under French dominion; as moneyed men, they realised the opportunities that war and a necessitous Government offered them.

Since the Revolution was accomplished according to the principles of the Whigs, they dominated the Convention, but lost their power when their proposals of constitutional reform and of party revenge threatened to lead to the neglect of the war and to the conversion of the Tories into Jacobites. The King declared that "Whoever goes about to obstruct or divert your application to these matters (the affairs of war) . . . can neither be my friend nor the Kingdom's."<sup>1</sup> After the Dissolution of the Convention the Tories took office for four years (1690-94). They were then dismissed because they were unwilling to prosecute the European War, once the immediate danger to England had been removed, and because the death of Mary (1694) removed the last check upon their personal dislike of William. From 1694-6 the Whigs were in power, commissioned to press forward with the war and with the Financial Revolution which the War demanded. When a violent agitation for peace developed in 1696, the Tories took office and remained in control until 1705, though after the election of November, 1701, against their inclinations and set policy, they were forced to carry out a vigorous war programme.

When, however, like the Whigs of the Convention the

The power of the parties determined by the course of the War.

<sup>1</sup> Cited from Feiling, *History of the Tory Party*, p. 276 n.

The Tories  
are over-  
thrown,  
1705

Tories began to oppress their rivals, they were again dismissed. War necessitated party peace, both the Whigs in 1690 and the Tories in 1705 had to learn that war did not allow party feuds to be opened. The Tory attempt to crush the Dissenters, "the most spreading branch of the Whig party,"<sup>1</sup> by introducing Occasional Conformity Bills, drew from the Lords the declaration that "in time of war they thought alterations unnecessary and dangerous, and that they were unwilling to bring any real hardships upon Dissenters . . . or give them any cause of jealousy or fears."<sup>2</sup> Realising the necessity for party peace in time of war, the Queen made the statement that "she would inviolably maintain the Toleration"<sup>3</sup> She therefore withdrew the support which she had given—unsuccessfully—to the Bill of 1702 and connived, first, at the secret opposition, and then at the open hostility, of Marlborough and Godolphin to the Bills.

But return  
to power,  
1710

By 1710 the Whigs had lost their power; they were dismissed with Godolphin; the Duchess of Marlborough had to leave the Royal service; and though the Duke was left in command till the end of 1711, he was powerless. In the Lords, Whig opposition to the Peace was overcome by the Queen's creation of eleven peers. For this revolution in party politics there were several reasons; in the first place, Harley, with the assistance of Mrs. Masham, won the ear of the Queen, who was all the more ready to listen because of the aggressive way in which the Whigs had forced distasteful ministers upon her. The burden of taxation had become intolerable; the merchant shipping of the nation had suffered severe loss, and so great was the decline of our trade that, despite considerable increase in the incidence of taxation, its total yield between 1701 and 1706 fell by £300,000. Yet the Whigs refused the favourable terms offered by Louis in 1709, and by concluding the Barrier Treaty with the Dutch, showed that they loved war for war's sake, and that they would allow England's allies to

<sup>1</sup> Swift, *Examiner* No. 37 (1711); Trevelyan, *Select Documents*, p. 62

<sup>2</sup> Burnet, *Hist of His Own Times*, vol. II., p. 217

<sup>3</sup> Leadam, *Polit. Hist.*, vol. IX, p. 69.

reap a considerable share of the benefits of her successes. Finally, the Whigs' spiteful attack upon Sacheverell and the virtual failure of the impeachment which only Godolphin's personal pique had promoted,<sup>1</sup> led to their complete overthrow. The Tories returned to power, speedily concluded peace, and remained in power till the Queen's death.

Thus the War dictated the fluctuations of party politics. When war was at its height, a Whig Government and Whig Policy at home as well as abroad were to be expected. when interest in the war was waning, a Tory Government and Tory Policy were to be anticipated. For the Whigs, the Bill of Rights and the Toleration Act were only the beginnings of their policy to free Parliament from the control of the Crown and to remove from Dissenters political and social disabilities. "They did not think the prerogative to be yet sufficiently limited,"<sup>2</sup> and asserted that "religion ought to make no distinction at all among Protestants."<sup>3</sup> Although the Tories detested this latter heresy and had no sympathy, based in any way on principle, with the tolerance of their rivals, they were ready to support them against William. They disliked him as a foreigner and hated his preference of Dutch to English counsellors, and would therefore support measures to limit his power, even though in doing so they were following Whig principles and supporting the Whig party. Consequently, whilst the Mutiny Act (1689) forced the King to obtain the sanction of Parliament annually to his maintenance of military discipline,<sup>4</sup> the Triennial Act (1694) prevented him from keeping a Parliament, however much to his liking, longer than three years.<sup>4</sup> The Bank of England was forbidden to lend to the King without the permission of Parliament, and the Censorship of the Press was allowed to lapse. Bills were also introduced to lessen the power of the Crown over the Commons by excluding placemen from seats and to render the Bench

Both parties  
unite in op-  
position to  
William III

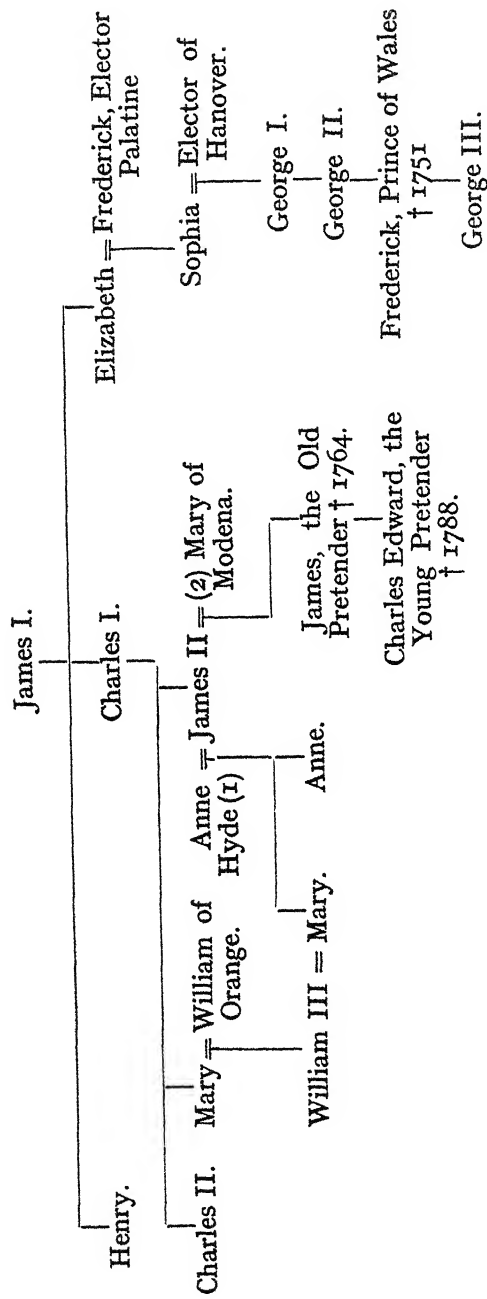
Restrictions  
on the power  
of the  
Crown

<sup>1</sup> See Grant-Robertson, *Select Statutes*, p. 421.

<sup>2</sup> Swift, *Examiner* No. 36 (1711), Trevelyan, *Select Documents*, p. 60.

<sup>3</sup> Swift, *Examiner* No. 36 (1711), Trevelyan, *England under Stuarts*, p. 471 and note.

<sup>4</sup> See Grant-Robertson, *Select Statutes*, pp. 108 and 138.



# THE HANOVERIAN SUCCESSION

independent by securing the judges in office during good behaviour instead of during the King's pleasure but these proposals did not then become law, owing to the opposition of the King and of a party in the Lords

After the conclusion of peace in 1697, the Tories reduced the King's army, dismissed his Dutch guards, forced him to surrender his favourite minister, Sunderland, and cancelled his grants of forfeited lands in Ireland. In the Act of Settlement (1700), whilst they proved their loyalty to the Hanoverian and Protestant Succession, they veiled their denunciation of William's misdeeds only thinly. Since Mary was dead, William's life precarious, and both he and Anne without heirs or probable prospect of issue, the Act "to obviate all Doubts and Contentions," caused by "any pretended title to the Crown"<sup>1</sup> provided that, in the event of Anne dying childless, the Electress Sophia and her heirs Protestant should succeed. The Catholic Stewart claimants were thus excluded. On the other hand, the Act forbade wars to be waged in defence of foreign territory, and provided that henceforth no monarch should leave the country without the sanction of Parliament. To check the promotion of Dutchmen or other foreigners, the Act ordered that no alien should sit in the Privy Council or in Parliament or hold any office; the control of the Privy Council by Parliament was to be secured by the clause that those of the Council who sanctioned any measure should sign it and so leave themselves open to the attack of Parliament. To diminish the power of the Crown in the Commons, the Act resolved that no placeholder should sit in Parliament: and to free the Bench from dependence upon the Crown, judges were to hold office *Quamdiu se bene gesserint*.

The Act of  
Settlement,  
1700

Following the election of 1701, the Tories were preparing to impeach the Whig leaders, Somers and Montague, to force the King to execute the law against the Catholics, and to place further restrictions on religious toleration, when Louis's recognition of the Pretender compelled them to abandon their proposals. Though they were again returned at the election of November, 1701, they were committed

The out-  
break of War  
and the ac-  
cession of  
Anne end the  
resistance to  
royal power

<sup>1</sup> See the Act printed in Grant-Robertson, *Select Statutes*, p. 151.

to the war with France, and were therefore unable to fulfil their party programme. The death of William and the accession of Anne effected a great change. Anne was a zealous supporter of the High Church party, and her accession reconciled the Tories to the Crown, removing their opposition, which did not rest on principle but on personal hostility to William. The Whigs also were now ready to postpone further constitutional reforms and to give their attention to the war, and all were satisfied with the Queen. She was truly English, with neither the desire nor the need to advance foreigners and neither the ability nor the foresight necessary to obstruct the wishes of the country or to impose her personal designs upon the people. However obstinate in the defence of her prejudices, she was so easily controlled by those in her favour that it was said "her ministers and favourites have an entire credit and full power with her." She drew up no treaty of which her ministers were ignorant, and she would retain no minister in the face of the wishes of Parliament as William tried to do. Consequently projects for the further limitation of royal power were abandoned.

Party strife  
is also sus-  
pended.

The Tories endeavoured to use their powers against their Whig rivals by introducing the Occasional Conformity Bills, but, owing to the opposition of Marlborough and Godolphin, they were unsuccessful. While in power from 1705-10 the Whigs were too fully occupied with the war to undertake constitutional measures or party revenge, until their foolish attack upon Sacheverell effected their overthrow.

The Tories  
in power,  
1710-14.

Unfortunately, no such moderation marked the second great period of Tory power (1710-14), for almost immediately on taking office Harley and St. John set to work to crush the Dissenters and to establish the political power of their own party. The conclusion of peace made it easier for them to follow their plans, only dissension in their own ranks and the needs of providing for the Succession again restricted their energies. Their primary desire was to restore their monopoly of political power, they therefore passed the Occasional Conformity Bill (1711) to prevent the Whig Dissenters from evading the Corporation and Test Acts and to force them either to enter the Estab-

Their ex-  
clusiveness

lished Church or to retire from public life. It punished with dismissal and other severe penalties those who, having accepted an office in the Local or Central Government of the kingdom, worshipped with Dissenters.<sup>1</sup> The second great aim of the Tories was "to fill the employments of the Kingdom down to the meanest with Tories," and thus to establish the power of "the landed interest."<sup>2</sup> They passed an Act imposing a property qualification upon Members of Parliament, ordering that every knight of a shire should hold land to the annual value of £600, and that every member for a borough should hold land to the annual value of £300. The object of this Act was not to exclude the poorest classes, who can have played little part in politics, but the hated moneyed classes, the Whig merchants and the army officers. In the same spirit the Tories repealed the Whig Act facilitating the naturalisation of foreign refugees, for these were generally ardent Whigs. The Tory leaders also harnessed a team of pamphleteers to their service and imposed a tax upon newspapers, designed to make it more difficult for the Whigs to make use of the Press.

After the conclusion of Peace dissension broke out within the Tory Party, and Harley and St. John became first, secret rivals, and then, open enemies. Their characters were calculated to create friction. Harley, a small and insignificant man of "few words and strong reasons,"<sup>3</sup> yet sluggish, casual and careless, St. John, handsome, a man of brilliant conversation and scintillating wit, able to captivate many a lady's heart and ready to "desert a sick wife to chase women of the streets,"<sup>4</sup> a man whose morals caused much scandal and whose orthodoxy was doubted. St. John was a thoroughbred Tory, the leader of squires and parsons, untainted by Whig doctrines, while Harley was more moderate, less arrogant and dogmatic. Harley wished to unite men of all parties and creeds in the service of their sovereign, St. John wished only to "separate . . . the chaff from wheat,

The feud  
between  
Harley and  
St. John

<sup>1</sup> See Act in Grant-Robertson, *Select Statutes*, p. 187.

<sup>2</sup> Bolingbroke, *Letter to Sir W. Windham* (ed. 1753), p. 22.  
Trevelyan, *England under the Stuarts*, p. 472.

<sup>3</sup> Swift, Feiling, *History of the Tory Party*, p. 315.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 434.



to consider who you have left to employ and to assign them their parts." St John wished "to fill the employments of the Kingdom down to the meanest with Tories."<sup>1</sup>

St John  
becomes  
supreme.

From 1712, therefore, St. John and Harley were working almost openly at cross purposes, and the former, having a definite, clear-cut programme before him, began to increase his power and influence at the expense of his rival. Harley had been created Lord Oxford in 1711, but St. John did not receive a peerage till the following year, and even then he became merely a Viscount. In 1713, when Oxford was endeavouring to win to his side first the Whigs, and then the High Church party, Bolingbroke, having taken up the leadership of the extreme Tories, vacant since the death of the Earl of Rochester (1711), was pleading for a genuinely party administration. The election of that year practically established the power of Bolingbroke, who began also to win the ear of the Queen, and succeeded, at least by 1714, in securing the services of Mrs Masham, formerly attached to Oxford's service in the Royal Chamber. Oxford remained inactive, moreover, while Bolingbroke brought about the passing of the Schism Act, dared even to propose an enquiry into the profits of the Assiento, and appeared to intend to discredit his colleague. Shortly afterwards, in July, 1714, Bolingbroke obtained the dismissal of the rival who had become an enemy.

His Tory  
policy.

Bolingbroke's policy was clearly defined. He had begun to remove all the Whig officers from the Services, he appealed to the High Church Tories by passing the Schism Act, ordering that every schoolmaster and tutor should obtain a licence from the bishop, should accept the Anglican form of worship, and should attend Anglican services<sup>2</sup>. Had Bolingbroke remained long in power, the position of the Whigs and the Dissenters would have become still more perilous. His foreign policy was mainly concerned with the establishing of favourable relations with France: he showed great leniency with regard to the covenanted demolition of the fortifications of Dunkirk, and he welcomed the suggestion

<sup>1</sup> See p. 35, note 2

<sup>2</sup> See Grant-Robertson, *Select Statutes*, p. 190.

of the Duke of Savoy to form an alliance with France to restrain imperial aggression.

Fortunately for Toleration, and for England's position in Europe, the question of the Succession had already come into prominence. Only the attitude of the Whigs to this question was clear: they would never allow a Jacobite Restoration, for it still implied the repudiation of the National Debt and the ruin of the moneyed interest. The rigours of Bolingbroke's policy, moreover, had finally convinced them that a restoration of the Stewarts and the consequent political domination of the Tories would lead to their annihilation. They therefore sought to have the Elector of Hanover brought to England, to place a price on the head of the Pretender, and to open negotiations, through Nottingham, with the Hanoverian Tories. The Tories were hopelessly divided; a section was prepared for the Hanoverian Succession; but on the whole they realised that with the accession of George I their power would be broken. Therefore their official leaders, Oxford and Bolingbroke, both had negotiations with the Pretender, yet Oxford was sincerely attached to Hanover and Bolingbroke, resting on the support of the High Church Tories, could never afford to support the Pretender unless he would become an Anglican. This James steadily refused to do. Bolingbroke therefore concentrated his energies on increasing the power of the Tories, hoping that whether James or George succeeded when Anne died, he and his party would be sufficiently strong to command recognition.

Bolingbroke's power undetermined by his inability to settle the Succession,

The divisions of the Tory party ruined it; for Bolingbroke's triumph "was rotten before he could harvest it."<sup>1</sup> Had he been given a long lease of power, having the support of the Queen, he might have made the support of the Tories essential to the succeeding sovereign and have thrust upon the country the religious intolerance, the power of the squirearchy, and the penalisation of the moneyed classes, for which his party stood. But Bolingbroke was robbed of his projected victory by the death of the Queen just five days after Oxford had been dismissed. George, Elector of

and by the divisions of the Tory party

<sup>1</sup> Feiling, *History of Tory Party*, p. 361.

Hanover, was proclaimed King, a Regency was formed under the Act of 1705,<sup>1</sup> and on September 18 the Elector landed in England, before the Pretender was able to make any attempt to prosecute his claims to the throne.

The Hanoverian Succession completes the work of the Revolution

With the peaceful accession of George I the Revolutionary era was closed. Of the Glorious Revolution the results were wide and far-reaching. Most important of all, the power of England had been turned successfully against France; a definite check was given to French aggression; the autocracy of Louis was defeated at Torbay. The authority of the English Parliament was vindicated against the divine right of the King, and the exercise of the prerogative was limited so that it might never again openly set aside the voice of the people. English Dissenters had won for themselves a measure of toleration, for the persecuting measures of the recent Tory Reaction did not long remain in force; and although Anglicans continued to hold a legal monopoly of political power for another century, they were no longer able to penalise the worship of their rivals. As a result of the Revolution and of the war, England gained a fiscal system which became the basis of its commercial prosperity; the Union with Scotland facilitated its commercial development and brought fresh vitality to its political system. The Revolution stimulated the ambitions of England's trade, producing a crop of continental wars, leading England's sons to the furthest corners of the world and establishing the power of the Whig moneyed classes. Commercial supremacy and the dominance of the Whig aristocracy are the outstanding facts of English history in the eighteenth century.

<sup>1</sup> See Grant-Robertson, *Select Statutes*, p. 179.

## CHAPTER II

### THE HANOVERIAN SUCCESSION AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF WALPOLE

GEORGE had secured his throne with ease and the country had peacefully accepted his accession, yet none the less the possibility of a Stewart Restoration cast a long shadow over England for the next thirty years. To everyone except the Jacobites, George, despite his reserve and aloofness, was indispensable. Fortunately, at heart, George valued his new kingdom as much as his new subjects valued him. King and people were therefore united in the defence of the new dynasty and they demanded, in consequence, the formation of a Whig administration, a policy of peace, essential both to the security of the throne and to the commercial prosperity of the nation, and the maintenance of the Peace of Utrecht which guaranteed the Hanoverian Succession.

The danger  
of a Stewart  
restoration  
demands

a Whig ad-  
ministration  
and a policy  
of peace

The Whigs had first to deal with the Jacobite Rebellion of 1715, which combined clan jealousies, national love of independence and hatred of the Union with the loyalty of the Jacobites to the Pretender. Taking advantage of the reluctance of the people to risk anything for the Stewarts until their success was assured, and profiting by the rebels' lack of organisation, their inability to secure foreign assistance, and the weakness of the Pretender's personal effort, the Parliament easily crushed the Rising. The Jacobites launched another plot in 1720, but again the Government was too powerful for them.<sup>1</sup>

The Jacobite  
Rebellion of  
1715 is sup-  
pressed

Far more serious was the popular discontent in Scotland and Ireland. In Scotland the opposition to the Malt Tax and the agitation connected with the Porteous Riots, and in Ireland the incidents connected with Wood's Halfpence and the publication of Drapier's Letters, showed how

Discontent  
in Scotland  
and Ireland

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter IX.

slight was the hold of England upon those countries in the early part of the Hanoverian period <sup>1</sup>

The danger  
of the South  
Sea Bubble

Only four years after the Jacobite Rebellion the country was shaken to its foundations by the South Sea Bubble. Tories were still writhing under their exclusion from power, and were fearful for the legal rights of their Church, when the Whig moneyed classes suddenly found their fortunes imperilled by this financial upheaval. Little wonder that the Speaker wrote "Could the Pretender then have landed at the Tower, he might have rode to St. James' with very few hands held up against him."<sup>2</sup> The throne and the Revolutionary Settlement were in danger, and England is indebted to Walpole for delivering the country from its panic, securing the throne of the Hanoverians, and assuring the position of the nation in the world by twenty years of peaceful government.

The South  
Sea Com-  
pany's  
scheme

The South Sea Company, founded in 1711, held the monopoly of English trading rights with Spanish America, conferred by the Treaty of Utrecht. It had become a subscriber to the National Debt, and now, having outbid the Bank for the privilege, its Directors prepared to take over nearly thirty-one millions more of the Debt. To the Company the scheme would bring an increase of capital at a low price, and to the Government it brought the advantages of a reduction of interest and the concentration of the debt in the hands of one creditor.

leads to a  
financial  
crisis

This was a conversion scheme which followed principles that had already been successfully adopted in similar ventures. There was in it nothing intrinsically dishonest. But if the conversion was to be satisfactory to the Company, its own Stock had to sell at a high price: the Company therefore indulged in many devices to raise its credit, and purely speculative expedients were often introduced. Many subscribers in this way suffered very great losses. There had already sprung up a wave of speculation, at first sound and genuine, but later merely foolish and wild, which reached such bounds that a collapse of the Stock Market was in-

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter IX.

<sup>2</sup> *Camb. Hist. of Brit. Emp.*, vol. i., p. 349.

evitable South Sea Company shares which in January, 1720, had sold at 128½, by June of the same year were selling at 1,060, and hosts of fresh Companies sprang into being—a Company “for a wheel for perpetual motion,” and a “Company for carrying on an undertaking of great advantage, but nobody to know what it is”<sup>1</sup> Suspicions could not be postponed indefinitely; subscribers began to sell, the widespread desire to realise Stocks bred further, and often unnecessary, fears, further selling, and further consequent depreciation of Stocks. South Sea Stock fell from 1,060 in June to 150 in September; other shares depreciated correspondingly; banks closed their doors and many failed; even firms of repute could not face so great a crisis, and numbers were ruined.

The Government was not unnaturally accused of aiding and abetting the South Sea Company in producing this catastrophe. Many high officials had received Stock as bribes; George’s German mistresses were incriminated; the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Aislaby) was accused of malpractice, expelled from the Commons and sent to the Tower, other political punishments would probably have followed but, a Secretary of State committed suicide and the Postmaster-General died of small-pox: Stanhope fell dead in the heat of debate; Sunderland resigned. To Walpole the country in its alarm now turned. Though he had personally profited from opportune, but legal, dealings in Company shares, Walpole had not ceased to warn the country of the dangers of the scheme. He now became First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer. By careful manœuvring and acute economic transactions he diverted the country from its anger against Hanover, the Government and the Company, and restored peace and financial stability.<sup>2</sup>

and en-  
dangers the  
position of  
the Govern-  
ment.

Walpole, then forty-five years of age, the son of a rich Whig landowner of Norfolk, was a typical squire, drinking hard, swearing often, hunting constantly, except when his mistresses demanded his attention. His pleasures lay not

Walpole’s  
career and  
character

<sup>1</sup> Leadam, *Political History of England*, vol. ix., p. 295.

<sup>2</sup> On this subject see Appendix

in books or studies but in the coarse talk of the table or in the exercise of the field. Nevertheless he possessed acute foresight and perception, an orderly mind, and the ability to make quick yet accurate decisions. Educated at Eton and King's College, Cambridge, he had married a Lord Mayor's daughter, entered Parliament when twenty-six, and secured a minor office four years later, so that by 1714 he was already a notable speaker and a clever politician on the Whig benches. With Townshend he entered the Government as First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer (1715), he shared his leader's retirement (1717-20) and returned only as Paymaster of the Forces (1720). He now held office until 1742.

His policy  
aims at se-  
curing the  
Hanoverian  
Succession

An ardent Whig, Walpole was firmly attached to the Hanoverian Succession, and made his chief consideration to secure its hold upon the country. He played a great part in the development of orderly Parliamentary government, and thoroughly realised the need for religious peace, but he chiefly concerned himself with the financial prosperity and economic development of the country. He believed that the chief means to attach the people to the Hanoverian régime was to maintain peace, to win the Tories to the new dynasty by reducing the taxation which fell largely upon them, and to develop the commerce of the nation.

He reduces  
taxation

Walpole described the Land Tax as "a burden, so long and so grievously borne by a small proportion of the whole collective body of the nation," for it fell largely upon Tory squires. He therefore reduced it so that, excepting in the years 1727-9, the Land Tax was never more than 2s. in the £ until after the outbreak of war in 1739, and in 1732-33 it stood at as low a figure as 1s. in the £. Walpole looked with favour on a general reduction of taxation, for taxation caused discontent and injured national trade. One of the chief reasons for heavy taxation lay in the size of the National Debt, which even in 1714 stood at over fifty-four millions, and on which interest, at an average rate of from 6 to 7 per cent, amounted to over three and a half millions. To reduce the Debt was therefore an important step towards reducing taxation. The rate of interest was reduced in 1717 and

1727, and a further reduction was proposed in 1737 (though then opposed by Walpole). The saving produced by the reduction of 1717 formed the nucleus of the Sinking Fund, which Walpole designed and Stanhope established after Walpole's resignation. By 1727 six and a half millions had been paid into this Fund; and in spite of frequent raids upon it nearly nine millions of Debt had been paid off when Walpole left office. Reforms in financial administration and the reorganisation of the Customs also reduced direct taxation.

and estab-  
lishes a  
Sinking  
Fund

Walpole trusted, however, far more to the active stimulation of the commerce of the country than to any policy of mere financial retrenchment. He took strong measures to prevent smuggling, putting heavy penalties on smugglers, enlarging the powers of Excise officers against them, and encouraging traders to suppress both smuggling and fraud. By reducing duties, and by replacing duties by excises levied only on goods taken out of the warehouse for domestic sale, he hoped to make smuggling unprofitable. He tried to obtain an increase of trade by simplifying and systematising the levying of the duties, for the fact that one article might be subject to ten or twelve distinct, heavy duties inevitably hampered trade.<sup>1</sup> He attempted also to develop the shipping of the country by granting bounties to the Greenland whale fishers.

He stimu-  
lates  
the develop-  
ment of  
trade

The most important object of Walpole's economic policy was to make Britain and British industry and shipping supreme in the world. This necessitated that raw materials should be imported cheaply and that the export of manufactures should be facilitated and encouraged. Import duties on dyeing materials, on beaver-skins used for making hats, on salt used for the herring-curing trade, on old rags or rope used for the manufacture of paper, were all either reduced or abolished. Duties levied on English manufactured goods were set aside; in 1721 alone, Walpole abolished thirty-eight import duties on raw materials, and 106 duties upon the export of British manufactures.<sup>2</sup> Bounties on the

and reduces  
import and  
export  
duties

<sup>1</sup> See Brisco, *Economic Policy of Walpole*, p. 132.

<sup>2</sup> Morley, *Walpole*, p. 167.



export of British goods were now liberally given and the gunpowder, silk, sail-cloth, and sugar-refining trades greatly benefited by these. While the Government endeavoured to secure the foreign market by granting favours to the home manufacturer, with the same object, it regulated the quality and size of goods which were exported, lest frauds and bad workmanship should damage English credit overseas. The reduction of duties necessarily gave a great impetus to English shipping.

The Excise  
Scheme,  
1733,

The climax of Walpole's commercial policy was reached with the introduction of his Excise Scheme of 1733. The Excise System (that is, the supervised warehousing of all imports, on which duties were paid only if taken out for home consumption) had been applied to tea, coffee and coconuts in 1724, and was to be applied by the scheme of 1733 to tobacco and to wine. The allowance of free re-exportation would give encouragement to the English carrying trade, and by simplifying the collection of duties, by rendering smuggling unprofitable, and by checking innumerable frauds and misrepresentations,<sup>1</sup> the Scheme would produce a considerable increase of revenue. The additional virtue of the Excise Scheme for Walpole was that the increase of revenue would permit the lowering of the Land Tax and would be the replacement of taxation of a class by that of the whole nation.

ruined by  
the Opposi-  
tion

Unfortunately the Scheme was ruined by the factious opposition of Walpole's Parliamentary enemies, and a great financial reform was postponed till the days of the Younger Pitt. A wave of the most violent and fanatical agitation swept through the country; scurrilous placards attacking Walpole were paraded through the streets of London, and once Walpole himself had to leave the House by a back way, even then narrowly escaping with his life. For a time it seemed as if the days of the Popish Plot had returned. Men said that the increase of revenue would only strengthen the hands of the King against his subjects, that an army of excisemen would be foisted as placemen, dependents of the Crown, upon the Commons; and one wrote that "the Excise-

<sup>1</sup> Brisco, *op. cit.*, p. 108-9.

men were (like a foreign army) going to invade and devour them and ready to enter their houses, into all Houses, private or public, at any time, by Day or by Night "<sup>1</sup> Walpole had either to face almost certain defeat or to abandon the Scheme: he chose the latter course, and produced no more financial reforms.

Walpole's attitude to the colonies calls for particular notice. Like other politicians of his day, he looked on them merely with the eyes of the financial leader of the Mother Country; he realised that they turned the Balance of Trade in Great Britain's favour, taking from her £200,000 more goods than they sent her, and employing at least a quarter of England's shipping. Whilst, therefore, Walpole did not allow the colonies to have industries which were likely to compete with those of the Mother Country, and whilst he forced them to send to Great Britain those goods which she required, on the other hand, he encouraged the production of such goods as Great Britain needed, and facilitated that trade with Europe which gave them the means to buy English manufactures. The colonies were to produce raw material for Great Britain and to take in return British manufactures. Thus copper-smelting and hat-making in the colonies were forbidden (1722 and 1732); and sugar-refining was discouraged by heavy duties placed on the importation of refined sugar into Great Britain; tobacco, dyeing goods, rice, raw sugar, furs, and copper ore might be exported to Great Britain only. On the other hand, bounties were placed on naval goods, and a preference given to colonial coffee, and to West Indian sugar entering the British North American colonies. In spite of the Navigation Acts, Carolina and then Georgia were allowed to export rice direct to Europe, instead of being forced to send it first to Great Britain; later, colonial sugar was also granted this concession. The object of these measures was to develop colonial prosperity, so that the colonies might be better able to buy goods from Great Britain. But in Walpole's time

Walpole's  
colonial  
policy

does not  
allow the  
colonies to  
compete  
with the  
Mother  
Country

But de-  
velops their  
trade in raw  
materials.

<sup>1</sup> *Eng Hist Rev* (1927), p. 38, "The Excise Scheme, 1733" (Prof. E. R. Turner)—A Letter from a Member of Parliament for a Borough in the West, pp. 9-10.

regulations which bore hardly on the colonists were laxly maintained, and, since the colonies had few manufactures of importance, the policy of Whitehall placed no great hardship upon them. Walpole contributed almost nothing to imperial theory: he accepted the colonial policy of his generation; yet he sought to promote the economic prosperity of America, so long as its interest did not conflict with that of England.

Walpole's  
belief in the  
Theory of  
the Balance  
of Trade

The basis of Walpole's policy clearly was his belief in the Theory of the Balance of Trade and his insistence on a preponderance of exports over imports. Consequently he directed his policy not in favour of the individual but towards the development of national strength. It was the staple industries of the country, and industry rather than agriculture, which benefited most from his régime. It would be completely untrue to call Walpole a Free Trader, for he lowered import duties only on raw materials and maintained a tariff barrier against foreign manufactures, and he had no belief in the advantages of unfettered competition. He was no innovator, the theory of the Balance of Trade in which he believed was almost universally accepted at that time. Nor is a later generation entitled to ask of him changes of policy which only extraordinary enlightenment could dictate. Yet, adopting current economic theory, Walpole, by his reduction of duties and his allowance of direct export from America to Europe, made some inroad upon the mercantilist system. His interest lay in the practical management of business, not in the development of commercial doctrines.

The bene-  
ficial effects  
of his econo-  
mic policy

There is no doubt of the success of Walpole's economic policy. English shipping increased by nearly a million tons and by over two million pounds in value between 1723 and 1738. Whereas British exports in 1720 were worth nearly seven millions and imports just over six million pounds, leaving a favourable balance of trade of under a million pounds, in 1738 exports totalled almost ten millions, and imports nearly seven and a quarter millions, leaving a favourable balance of two and three-quarter millions. The total volume of trade increased by over thirty per cent.,

imports expanding by over twenty per cent. and exports by over forty per cent. Woollen manufactures increased by nearly a million pounds; over eight thousand more tons of iron were produced; over two million quarters more corn were exported, and there was a corresponding increase of trade in the silk, copper and brass industries.<sup>1</sup> The country enjoyed twenty years of unhindered prosperity and economic development, which shortly enabled it to undertake new enterprises that even Walpole had never conceived.

Great as were Walpole's services to the country, criticisms can be levelled against him both as a financier and as an economist. As a financier, he reduced taxation upon his own generation instead of paying off the Debt and relieving the burdens of future generations. Yet in his defence, it must be said, that reduction of taxation seemed justified by its effect in placating the Tory gentry and in attaching them to the Hanoverian dynasty. As an economist, accepting the current Theory of the Balance of Trade, he placed hardships upon individual trades; though his period of power was advantageous to industry in general, he conferred benefits on the staple industries without giving corresponding favours to others. In fact, he encouraged an artificial development of certain trades, indirectly at the expense of others. It is, however, only fair to add that the statesmen of all countries at that time were equally under the spell of the Theory of the Balance of Trade and that the criticism of Walpole's stimulation of certain industries is one which may be levelled at all schemes of trade protection, past or present.

Criticisms of his policy

(a) As a financier

(b) As an economist

English foreign policy, meanwhile, had been almost completely dictated by the condition of home affairs. The exhaustion of the country demanded peace, for England now had a National Debt of £54,000,000. There was a widespread desire in the country for economic and commercial development, merchants were anxious for peace that they might extend their trade unhindered. On the throne was George, the first of a new dynasty, which had yet to win its hold over the people. In France there was the

Britain's desire for peace in Europe

<sup>1</sup> See Brisco, *op. cit.* pp 178-181

Pretender, always ready to seize any opportunity offered by discontent in England to challenge George's right to the throne. Prosperity would produce satisfaction with the new monarch, but prosperity could only be attained in a period of peace: to avoid any affront to European powers, particularly to France, was essential if the Pretender was to be left without foreign help. A policy of non-intervention in Europe seemed therefore a necessity.

and for the  
maintenance  
of the Treaty  
of Utrecht

The reign of George and the rule of the Whigs necessitated adherence to the Peace of Utrecht. This peace guaranteed the Hanoverian Succession, which to the Whigs represented the security of the Revolutionary Settlement and of Government obligations to holders of the National Debt. But the Peace had also provided for the commercial development of the country: the possession of the Netherlands by Austria was a guarantee of England's trade with Central Europe: the possession of Gibraltar and Minorca by Great Britain gave protection to British trade in the Mediterranean, whilst the Assiento provided privileges in transatlantic commerce. To show their disapproval of a Tory peace the Whigs petitioned the Crown against its acceptance, and attempted to proceed against Bolingbroke and Oxford, its authors. But they adopted the Peace as the basis of their policy, and insisted on its maintenance.

The imperial  
alliance is

The Whigs succeeded to the traditions of the Grand Alliance, to the policy of friendship with Austria and Holland in opposition to France. Resistance to France was momentarily unnecessary as she showed a distinct readiness, for special reasons, to be England's ally. But if the necessity for opposition to France had passed away, the need for opposition to Spain had arisen.

a safeguard  
against the  
opposition  
of Spain.

Spain emerged from the previous war exhausted, and in evident need of a period of peace and economic reorganisation. Alberoni, her chief minister, realised this and set to work to follow a policy of retrenchment and pacific government. But this was not to the liking of the King, Philip V: the Peace of Utrecht had admitted his right to the Spanish throne and to the Spanish possessions in America, but had expressly debarred him from ascending the French throne. This he

regarded as unjust: his nephew, a sickly boy, five years old, was ruling in France after the death of Louis XIV in 1715, and Philip refused to admit the equity of his being permanently excluded from the French succession. Neither was Alberoni's peace policy palatable to the Spanish Queen, Elizabeth Farnese. She realised very well the wisdom of the Minister's plans, but she was an unscrupulous Italian Princess, who had personal ambitions for her own children. She saw that, since her husband, Philip V, had sons by a previous marriage, her children had little hope of ascending the Spanish throne.<sup>1</sup> She therefore viewed with anger the loss of the Spanish possessions in Italy, which the Peace of Utrecht had imposed, and designed to establish her sons in Parma and Tuscany and in Naples and Sicily.

Elizabeth  
Farnese

Here lay the cause of serious trouble with Austria. Charles VI, who had himself been proclaimed King of Spain during the course of the War of the Spanish Succession, had been given Naples, Sardinia, the Milanese and the Tuscan ports by the Peace of Utrecht. He was planning to exchange Sardinia for Sicily, which had been ceded to the Duke of Savoy. Charles would therefore resent the re-establishment of Spanish power in Italy, would resist the rule of Elizabeth's children in the Central Duchies and would be a competitor for the possession of Sicily.

opposes the  
loss of the  
Spanish  
possessions  
in Italy

Elizabeth, realising that her attack on the Peace Settlement of Utrecht would rouse English resistance, and that the Whigs were bound by tradition to the Austrian alliance, saw England as her great enemy. She therefore paraded a patriotic opposition to the English retention of Gibraltar and intrigued for its restoration to Spain. Through Alberoni she toyed with schemes for supporting the Pretender. An alliance of England and Holland with Austria in opposition to Spain was a foregone conclusion.

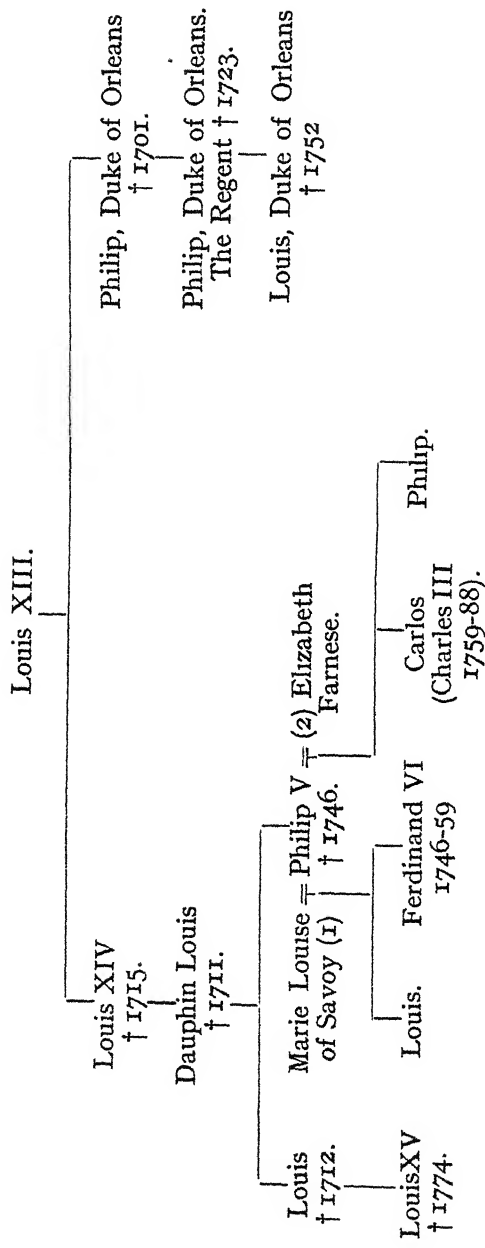
and fans the  
Spanish re-  
sistance to  
England.

The Spanish designs, however, led France to seek the friendship of her former enemy. After Louis XIV's death in 1715, the Duke of Orleans, the nephew of the late King,<sup>2</sup>

Great  
Britain finds  
an ally in  
France.

<sup>1</sup> Though on the death of Ferdinand VI (1759), Elizabeth's son, Don Carlos, did in fact succeed as Charles III of Spain

<sup>2</sup> See Genealogical Table, p. 50.



THE SUCCESSION IN FRANCE AND SPAIN

became Regent during Louis XV's minority. If Louis XV should die—and since he was extremely delicate it seemed probable that he would die young—the Duke of Orleans would become King unless the Treaty of Utrecht were broken and Philip V were allowed to succeed to France. The interest of the Regent lay therefore in the maintenance of the Peace; that of Philip, in its abolition. The Duke therefore set to work to secure an English alliance, and the Whigs found themselves not merely maintaining a Tory peace, but also adopting the Tory policy of friendship with France in defiance of every known Whig tradition.

England's chief desire was for peace. Finding Alberoni anxious also for this, the Townshend Ministry (1714-17) concluded a commercial treaty with Spain. Next, English influence was used to settle differences between Holland and the Empire, and to induce the Emperor to accept the Barrier Treaty, which provided for certain forts on the boundary between the Austrian Netherlands and France to be garrisoned by Dutch troops and to be maintained at the joint expense of Holland and the Empire. In 1716 Secretary Stanhope took advantage of the pacific intentions of Orleans to effect a treaty with France, and in the next year the alliance of England with France was converted into the Triple Alliance by the addition of Holland. France renewed her guarantee of the Hanoverian Succession, promised to expel the Pretender from France and to carry out the demolition of the fortifications of Dunkirk. On the other hand, England reiterated her promise to maintain the separation of the thrones of France and Spain. The Alliance was therefore an international defence of the throne of George I in England and of the power of Orleans in France. Stanhope, who had successfully conducted these negotiations with Dubois, the French Minister, now succeeded Townshend at the head of the Ministry, which lasted from 1717 to 1721, Townshend being removed to be Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland.

England attempts to safeguard the peace of Europe

by the Triple Alliance, 1717

Meanwhile Elizabeth Farnese's plans had been ripening, and in 1717 an opportunity for action presented itself. The arrest of a Spanish official in Italy by imperial orders was followed by the seizure of Sardinia by Spanish forces.

The opposition of Elizabeth Farnese



is met by the  
formation of  
the Quad-  
ruple Al-  
liance, 1718

This step would effectively prevent the Emperor's plan of exchanging Sardinia for Sicily. At the same time England and France both found themselves exposed to Spanish aggression. Ormond's expedition to Scotland in the name of the Pretender was supported by Alberoni, and a scheme was on foot for an attack on England and Hanover by Sweden, Russia and Prussia. In France, a plot to overthrow the Regent had the encouragement of Spain. The reply to these attacks was the formation of the Quadruple Alliance (1718), the Empire joining the three members of the Triple Alliance. On the one hand, the Allies were pledged to secure the exchange of Sardinia for Sicily for the Emperor and to force Philip V to abandon his designs on imperial territory. On the other hand, Elizabeth Farnese was to be appeased by the establishment of her son, Don Carlos, in the Duchies of Parma and Tuscany, and the Emperor was to be induced to abandon his use of Spanish titles, and admit the right of Philip to the Spanish throne.

War with  
Spain.

A brief struggle between the Allies and Spain ensued (1718-20). In France, the plot of Prince Cellamare to overthrow the Regent was discovered: the expedition of Ormond was defeated off the Irish coast. To strengthen the forces of the Emperor, Stanhope intervened to bring his war with the Turks to an end: the Peace of Passarowitz was concluded and the Emperor was enabled to turn his full attention to the war with Spain. England despatched her fleet to the Mediterranean and destroyed the Spanish fleet off Cape Passaro. Spain was obliged to make peace: Alberoni had already been dismissed: the Emperor exchanged Sardinia for Sicily, which he received from Savoy: in 1721 Stanhope died, and Townshend returned to power with Walpole.

Followed by  
disputes be-  
tween  
England and  
Austria

The chief points in dispute between the Empire and Spain had been submitted to the Congress of Cambrai, whose sessions became protracted and whose decisions were extremely infrequent. Whilst this Congress discussed its problems, events were taking a novel turn. England and Austria had come to the verge of an open rupture: for the Emperor had licensed the Ostend Company to trade in the

South Seas: and the prospect of Austrian competition roused the enmity of the merchants. At the same time France had quarrelled with Spain. The Duke of Orleans, the real founder of the English alliance, died in 1723, and his claim to the French throne passed to his son. The new Regent, however, was the Duke of Bourbon, the arch-enemy of Orleans. To prevent the possibility of his foe succeeding to the Crown, Bourbon designed to have Louis XV quickly married so that he might leave a son behind him to become King. Louis was now thirteen years of age, and was betrothed to the Spanish Infanta, aged six. The Infanta was therefore returned to Spain, and in 1725 the King was married to Marie Leczinski, the daughter of the ex-King of Poland. This was an open affront to Spain, and caused great indignation in Madrid. The allies, England and France, found themselves involved in disputes with Austria and Spain, who were, on their side, growing intensely dissatisfied with the indecision of the Congress of Cambrai.

and between  
France and  
Spain.

The result was that Spain and the Empire resolved to settle their own disputes, and to conclude an alliance. This was the "mad year" (1725). Spain recognised the rights of the Ostend Company, and ratified the Pragmatic Sanction which guaranteed the right of Maria Theresa, Charles VI's daughter, to succeed to the undivided Habsburg territories after his death. In return, the Emperor agreed to the settlement of Don Carlos in the Italian Duchies, and pledged himself to support Spain in her attempt to recover Gibraltar and Minorca. Both Spain and the Emperor agreed to partition France if they were successful in the war.<sup>1</sup> England suspected that a restoration of the Stewarts was also an object of the alliance, but this suspicion was without foundation. To this anomalous alliance, England, France and Prussia replied by forming the Treaty of Hanover, though Prussia soon withdrew her support, and then went over to the side of the Emperor. Again there was a small war between England and Spain (1727-29): the English fleet sailed into the Mediterranean, and Gibraltar easily withstood a Spanish attack. The Emperor left Spain without support

The "mad  
year," 1725

War with  
Spain, 1727

<sup>1</sup> *Camb Mod. Hist.*, vol. vi., pp. 57-8.

and she was therefore obliged to make peace: Ripperda, her chief minister, was dismissed

Walpole re-  
stores peace  
in Europe

Elizabeth Farnese then appealed to Walpole to win the recognition of her rights in Italy, and the Treaty of Seville was signed by England and Spain in 1729. By this Treaty Spain withdrew her recognition of the Ostend Company and restored the commercial privileges of the English. On the other side England undertook to see Don Carlos established in Parma and Tuscany: no definite settlement of the Spanish claim to Gibraltar was mentioned, though that claim was now virtually abandoned. The alliance of Spain and Austria was now at an end, but England had the task of bringing the Emperor to accept the conditions of the Treaty of Seville. In this she succeeded, for by the Second Treaty of Vienna (1731) the Emperor agreed to the establishment of Don Carlos in Parma and his succession to Tuscany had already been arranged with the Grand Duke: he also promised to suppress the Ostend Company. In return, England and Holland, who were also parties to the Treaty, ratified the Pragmatic Sanction. This Treaty had, however, been negotiated by England in secret without reference to France; for, as Walpole knew, the latter would not give an unconditional pledge to accept the Pragmatic Sanction. If, on the one hand, the alliance of the Empire with Spain had been dissolved, that between England and France had also been undermined.

but under-  
mines  
Britain's  
alliance with  
France

Walpole's  
foreign  
policy

Townshend's more vigorous foreign policy and his readiness to abandon Whig traditions completely by using force to make the Emperor accept the terms of the Treaty of Seville, had made him an unpalatable colleague to Walpole. He resigned and retired into private life; and Walpole was left in sole charge of English politics. He set himself with great determination to secure for England a period of peace, financial retrenchment, and economic development, by withdrawing more definitely from European affairs. "His politics were to keep free from all engagements as long as we possibly can."<sup>1</sup> He recognised, even more clearly than his predecessors, that peace was indispensable to the stability

<sup>1</sup> Morley, *Walpole*, p. 203.

of the throne and the prosperity of the nation. He knew that war created heavy taxation, that taxation fell chiefly on those Tory gentlemen whom he was anxious to reconcile to the new dynasty; and that war also provided foreign nations with the opportunity to embarrass the Government by supporting the Pretender. On the other hand, he saw that peace made for prosperity and prosperity for the adherence of the nation to the Hanoverian line. In 1733 Europe plunged into the War of the Polish Succession (1733-38), but Walpole did not allow England to raise a finger in the defence of either side, proudly declaring to Queen Caroline, "There are fifty thousand men slain in Europe and not one Englishman."<sup>1</sup>

Holland had already promised France to remain neutral, in return for a pledge by the French that they would not interfere in the Austrian Netherlands. England pleaded the example of Holland to justify her obstinate inactivity: when Austria, relying on the Treaty of Vienna, claimed the assistance of England, Walpole replied that the war had been precipitated by Austrian rashness and that no hostile measures could therefore be undertaken. Walpole laboured to restore the peace: whilst to Austria, the ally, he denied assistance, to France, the enemy, he constantly threatened action. he corresponded personally with ambassadors, and conducted arduous negotiations to break up the Bourbon alliance of France and Spain. In 1738 peace was made. Augustus III of Saxony was recognised as King of Poland; Stanislas Leczinski was promised the Duchy of Lorraine, when the death of the Grand Duke of Tuscany should make it possible to transfer the Duke of Lorraine thither. Don Carlos, baulked of his succession to Tuscany, and having already surrendered Parma to the Emperor, was established in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. Only one more year remained before the violence of the Parliamentary Opposition and the blind outcry of the nation plunged England headlong into the War of Jenkins's Ear and this, within a year, became merged in the larger struggle of the War of the Austrian Succession. Though Walpole remained in office

England refuses to join in the War of the Polish succession, 1733.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 209.

until 1742, he had lost control of state affairs when war broke out and the policy which he had advocated came to an end.

France gradually resumes opposition to Great Britain

The origins of a new war between England and the Bourbons are to be found in the gradual change which had begun to come over Anglo-French relations several years earlier. Since 1729 the alliance of England with France had become steadily more difficult to maintain. Chauvelin had become Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1727; nursing a keen animosity to England and Austria, he constantly put pressure upon Fleury to take action more independently of England's wishes; France was growing suspicious of England's increasing power and alarmed at her preparations against Spain. Since the death of Louis XIV it had suited her purpose to maintain close relations with England, but it was no part of her policy to assist in the strengthening of England's power. France also grew jealous of England's commercial prosperity and maritime position: there were again difficulties between the two governments regarding the fortifications of Dunkirk, and there were many disputes between French and English colonists in America. England had not consulted France in making the Second Treaty of Vienna with the Empire, but had tried to hide the negotiation from her. France could quite reasonably maintain that this was not the act of an ally, and that the basis of their friendship was destroyed: England had made her own terms with Spain and the Empire, and France was isolated.

and signs the Family Compact, 1733.

It was natural therefore that France should look for a fresh alliance to safeguard her own position and no alliance could be more natural than that of her Bourbon neighbour, Spain. To Louis XV a son had been born in 1729, and the prospect of Philip V's accession to the French throne became very remote. This event destroyed the *raison d'être* of the Anglo-French alliance and removed the chief obstacle to French friendship with Spain. In 1733 the Family Compact between the two Bourbon powers was drafted. France guaranteed the succession of Don Carlos in Italy and both agreed to attack the Emperor: in addition, Spain was to abolish English commercial privileges and France was to assist her to recover Gibraltar.

Here, then, the conditions of the War of the Austrian Succession had come into existence. England, having guaranteed the Pragmatic Sanction, was allied to the Empire, France was united to Spain in hostility to Austria and in an attempt to check the commercial development of England. The War of the Polish Succession postponed the struggle. Fleury and Chauvelin hoodwinked England into neutrality, Walpole being absorbed in domestic politics. For his inactivity in Europe he has been censured, on the grounds that it would have been for the benefit of England's honour and power to have accepted the challenge of the Family Compact immediately.<sup>1</sup> Yet Walpole believed that England would gain more by a continuance of peace than by her entrance into the European struggle, he was prepared to sacrifice England's prestige on the Continent in order to conserve her economic resources and to consolidate the position of the Hanoverian dynasty.

War with  
the Bour-  
bons is im-  
minent

English policy in the Baltic is also of some importance. At the opening of the century Sweden possessed Finland, Ingria, Carelia, Livonia, Esthonia and Western Pomerania, so that she had almost complete control of the Baltic, where, since the day of Russia's greatness was only just dawning, she was the chief power. A war had opened between Charles XII of Sweden against Poland, Russia and Denmark: after some amazing victories, Charles was completely crushed, and his army annihilated, at Pultava in 1709. Charles was obliged to fly into Turkish territory, whence he returned, in 1714, to renew the struggle, Russia succeeding in overrunning all the Baltic provinces belonging to Sweden. As Elector of Hanover, George I also entered into the war against Sweden, hoping to take from her the Duchies of Bremen and Verden. Hanoverian troops occupied Verden, and in 1715 George purchased the right to Bremen from Denmark, whose troops had already seized it. Four years later his authority in the two Duchies was recognised by Sweden. George naturally expected English assistance for Hanoverian policy in the Baltic, and an English fleet patrolled that sea from 1715-18. Having

Britain's  
policy in the  
Baltic

leads to as-  
sistance of  
Hanover

in the ac-  
quisition of  
Bremen and  
Verden

<sup>1</sup> See later, p. 61.

and in re-  
sistance to  
Russia.

secured the Duchies, George grew alarmed at the growth of the power of Russia, under Peter the Great, who had interfered in the election in the Duchy of Mecklenburg, and who seemed anxious to get that Duchy under his control. English naval power and English diplomacy were turned against Russia, Stanhope arranged terms of peace between Sweden and Britain, Prussia, Denmark, and finally Russia; though Sweden lost her Baltic possessions except Finland and Pomerania, she was saved from complete destruction. She was intended to serve as a balance to the rising power of Russia.

English  
Ministers  
accused of  
subservience  
to Hanover

Events seemed to justify the charge, often made against English ministries, of being subservient to the King and his German Electorate. There can of course be no doubt that in foreign affairs the personal influence of George I was considerable and the English ministers were often checked or overruled by the Hanoverian trio—Bothmer, Bernstorff and Robethon. They had communicated with the Whigs before 1714, and on George's accession had recommended Townshend and the Whigs for office. Their influence declined seriously, however, from about 1719, when Bernstorff's obstinate hostility to friendship with Prussia alienated the English Ministry. The last vestige of their power was destroyed by the entrance of Walpole into office in 1721.

But British  
policy is  
nationalistic

There were, however, many reasons why the British Government on its own account should wish to follow just that policy in the Baltic which the Electorate desired. The struggle in the Baltic, though essentially distinct from the troubles of the Mediterranean, was not wholly unconnected with them. On the one hand, Britain's enemies in the North, especially Charles XII, were suspected of plotting against the Hanoverian Succession in England, and on the other hand, both the Regent of France and Alberoni corresponded with the Northern Powers to launch attacks upon England in defence of the Pretender. France, moreover, fearing imperial designs, made determined attempts by pacific intervention in Baltic affairs to win the goodwill of Prussia and Russia. The real danger of support for the

Britain re-  
sists Stewart  
intrigues,

Pretender coming from Baltic Powers was actually slight, and was often exaggerated deliberately by some governments to justify their actions. Certainly the arrest of the Swedish ambassador and of the plotter, Gortz, in 1717, on a charge of conspiracy, was a demonstration to arouse sympathy for Baltic operations, rather than a piece of genuine defence against plotting. Yet the connection between Northern and Southern powers certainly justified the watchfulness of the Government.

Similarly the constant friendship with the Emperor which the opposition chose to regard as proof of Hanoverian influence can be fully justified by English interests. Since the days of William III the imperial alliance had become a regular item of the Whig programme. England's fixed determination to uphold the Treaty of Utrecht and her persistent opposition to Spain required the alliance with Vienna just as much as did the Hanoverian interests of George I. There was no more insistent adherent of the Imperial alliance than Walpole, who was English to the core; and the breach with the Empire in 1726 proved that neither tradition nor Hanoverian policy could maintain the alliance with Austria after it had ceased to serve England's interests.

England's commercial interests in the Baltic also justified the line of policy adopted. Her Baltic trade was important not because of its volume merely, or for its profit—for since it was unfavourable to the Balance of Trade it was actually disliked—but because from the Baltic came the goods essential to the navy—timber, tar, iron, hemp, and flax. Indeed, Townshend wrote (1715) that if the Baltic convoy miscarried "such a scarcity of naval stores must ensue as would disable His Majesty from fitting out a fleet next Spring in any event."<sup>1</sup> Hence English patriots could subscribe to war with Sweden because of the wanton damage which she inflicted upon English shipping and because of the obstinacy with which she refused to effect redress. Later England could turn against Russia which seemed to threaten to dominate the Baltic; and England was interested

<sup>1</sup> Chance, *George I and Northern War*, p. 9.



in Bremen and Verden because they controlled the mouth of the Weser

English foreign policy succeeds in the maintenance of the Hanoverian succession and the Treaty of Utrecht

English policy from 1714-39 commands respect, if not enthusiastic admiration. Successive ministries had set out to maintain the Hanoverian Succession and all that it represented to England, and therefore also to uphold the Treaty of Utrecht. In one important respect only had its provisions been broken. Spanish claims in Central Italy were admitted, and this only after English power in the Mediterranean had been fully secured. On the other hand, British statesmen had not only defeated the "Fifteen," but by securing the friendship of France, had prevented the Pretender from becoming a dangerous pawn in the hands of European Powers. France, from being the chief thorn in England's side, had become for the greater part of this period her ally. Until 1733, relying on the strength of English support, she allowed her energies to lag, her navy to be depleted, and her policy to be quiescent. At the same time her continued hostility to Spain and her sullen suspicion of possible Imperial designs in Central Europe caused her to lose an opportunity to turn her attention seriously to colonial and commercial development. If English foreign policy cannot be credited with either brilliance or great foresight, it was nevertheless firm and sound. Approximately twenty-five years had passed and Great Britain had been involved in no great war, these years of comparative peace were invaluable. They had allowed England to recover from the strain of her recent wars; they had made possible the undisturbed execution of Walpole's policy of commercial development; they had permitted a great expansion of English power overseas.

and in keeping the peace for twenty-five years

But Britain mortgages her interests in Europe

On the other hand, English maritime and commercial developments had been purchased at the expense of a certain mortgaging of her interests in Central Europe. England had watched the rapid rise to power of both Russia and Prussia, and had failed either to check or to win them. Prussian forces already exceeded those of the Empire,<sup>1</sup> and subsequent history soon revealed the strength of the Prussian

<sup>1</sup> *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, vol. xv., p. 252.

state, but she had become suspicious of English policy and alienated by Hanoverian distrust. Russia had been pushed into a sullen opposition to England which lasted for over a quarter of a century. At the same time England had lost her independence of action in Central Europe by recognising the Pragmatic Sanction, though here she only followed the lead of Spain, Russia and Prussia, and she herself was followed by Holland, Denmark and France. England stood face to face with an inevitable conflict with France and Spain for colonial and commercial supremacy. Her solitary ally was Austria, whose help would be negligible and whose demands for assistance would be considerable. Walpole has been severely criticised therefore for his neutrality in the War of the Polish Succession, on the grounds that he merely postponed an inevitable conflict and irritated his only ally, Austria. "Austria, our chief available ally (Prussia had not yet emerged as a Great Power), was humiliated and depressed. France, through our inaction, was once more the dominant power in Europe. . . . Walpole's resolute neutrality in the War of 1733 . . . was at any rate partially responsible for those later wars, in which disaster was only averted by something like a miracle, which neither he nor the country had any right to expect."<sup>1</sup> There is evidently much reason in that criticism: yet it may still be doubted whether an earlier intervention against the Bourbons would really have profited us. That the struggle was postponed, and not averted, is clear: yet that very postponement was perhaps to England's advantage, for every year of peace brought greater dynastic security and greater commercial success. Her foes were more confident, and perhaps more powerful, in 1740 than in 1733, yet she also was more fully prepared for the struggle at the later date. Further, England's intervention in the purely European struggle benefited her little in the War of the Austrian Succession, and it was perhaps better that she should not have plunged earlier into that struggle, but that she should remain at peace until her eyes had been opened to her real interests across the seas.

Walpole's  
policy of  
non-inter-  
vention  
criticised

and de-  
fended

<sup>1</sup> Sir R. Lodge, *English Neutrality in War of Polish Succession*. Trans. of R. Hist. Soc., 1931, 4th Ser., vol. xiv.

The decline  
of Walpole's  
power.

Though Walpole clung to office for a further three years, his power was broken by the outbreak of war in 1739. He had sustained a serious loss in the death of Queen Caroline in 1737, and the Opposition, always strong against him, steadily gained in power.

The oppo-  
sition

There were against him, first, still a few Jacobites ready to profit by discontent in Scotland or Ireland; there were the Tories led by Wyndham and Shippen, there was the Prince of Wales, whose quarrels with the King were a source of persistent trouble to Walpole, there were the malcontent Whigs, who complained almost daily of Walpole's autocracy and international cowardice; there were the Boys or Patriots, including Pitt, clamouring for a vigorous foreign policy and denouncing Hanoverian influence.

led by  
Bolingbroke

Most serious of all Walpole's opponents was Bolingbroke, the tireless intriguer, who contrived to unite Jacobite, Tory, and malcontent Whig in common hostility to the Minister that barred the way of them all to power. To his other exceptional resources Bolingbroke added an insidious friendship with the Prince of Wales, his model for the Patriot King. Having fled the country on being impeached after George I's accession, he was pardoned and returned in 1723, and recovered his estates; failing to win the friendship of Walpole, he immediately set to work as the secret and unofficial leader of the Opposition, combining "the wisdom of Socrates, the dignity and ease of Pliny, and the wit of Horace."<sup>1</sup> Cleverly organising Parliamentary opposition from behind the scenes, he won the ear of the public through the pages of *The Craftsman*, and only after a quarrel with Pultenay, Earl of Bath, in 1735, when his toils had had their effect, did he retire from politics, return to France and commit to paper his philosophy of statecraft. Of him Walpole said: "All they (the Opposition) say was only a repetition of the words he had put into their mouths and a spitting out that venom which he has infused into them."<sup>2</sup>

But though Walpole was forced to quit office, to enter the

<sup>1</sup> Morley, *Walpole*, p. 79.

<sup>2</sup> Cox, *Walpole*, vol. 1, p. 421. Cited from *Camb. Hist. of Brit. Emp.*, vol. i, p. 365.

House of Lords as Earl of Orford, and to play the rôle of royal wire-puller behind the scenes, tricking and thwarting for another four years the very factions which had overthrown him, he had served his country well. His was no period of dazzling brilliance. He had never won popularity either in the Houses or in the country, he had rarely startled politicians by any surprising innovation, and he had never introduced any violent abrogation of orthodox Whig policy. Nevertheless by sound and painstaking administration, by the masterful, if ponderous, command of the wearisome details of statecraft, he had made the future of the country secure by making it economically prosperous. He had set the dynasty of Hanover above serious opposition, if not beyond the complaints of factious demagogues, and he had given the nation twenty years of peace. Succeeding years of military defeats and incompetence, even if they indicated that England had been stagnating in her prosperity, yet made the country repent of the temerity of those who rushed into war unprepared, and appreciate the services of the statesman who, by careful opportunist methods, safeguarded and preserved the resources of the nation. Upon the basis of commercial prosperity and financial soundness which Walpole laid, Pitt was later able to fashion his brilliant policy. But though "Pitt inspired the nation, without Walpole the nation would have been incapable of evoking or of answering his appeal"<sup>1</sup>

The wisdom  
of his policy

The years between 1714 and 1742 had seen constitutional developments almost as important as those brought about by the Revolution. Though the Revolution had made any further Stewart Despotism impossible, William, and to a less extent, Anne, could frequently act in independence, if not in actual defiance, of Parliament. But the accession of the Hanoverians transferred to a much greater extent, at least for two reigns, royal power to its hands. Hence the Whigs, who came into power in 1714, found it unnecessary to continue their traditional policy of limiting the prerogative of the King. It is true they introduced the Peerage Bill in 1719, which by restricting the power of the Crown to create

The develop-  
ment of  
Cabinet  
Government  
made possi-  
ble by

<sup>1</sup> *Camb Hist. of Brit. Emp*, vol 1., p. 346.

the transfer-  
ence of the  
power of the  
King to his  
Ministers

peerages to six above the existing number,<sup>1</sup> would have made the Lords into a close oligarchy, independent of outside forces. This Bill was intended by Sunderland, then head of the Government, to reduce the influence of the Prince of Wales rather than of George I; for George was at that time at variance with his son and wished to limit his power in the event of his succession. The Bill was defeated by the efforts of one of the Whigs themselves—Walpole. The Whigs were certainly apprehensive of the character of the new sovereign and irritated by his love of his Electorate, but they had little need or desire to reduce his power by legal enactments. Indeed, they were far more concerned in securing themselves against their Tory rivals and against the autocracy of one of their own number, Walpole, whose power overshadowed their own. (Fifty years of continuous office tended to make them an exclusive body, jealous of any opposition, careless of the wishes of the country and ever ready to use their power not for the benefit of England but for their own advantage.) The power for which they had striven at the Revolution fell into their hands. They might attack Walpole on the grounds that "they were persuaded that a sole or even First Minister was an official unknown to the laws of Britain, inconsistent with the Constitution of this country and destructive of liberty in any government whatsoever,"<sup>2</sup> but their real reason was that Walpole, though he had ruled wisely for the country, had neglected their wishes and had excluded them from real power.

Nevertheless in spite of the exclusiveness of the Whigs and their selfish rule, there was in this period a noteworthy development of something approaching a Cabinet System. George I and George II spent a large part of their reigns abroad: they preferred Hanover to England, and they were absorbed in the mass of State business which the autocratic government of the Electorate cast upon them. In any case their abilities were only of the mediocre order. They did not speak English and few English statesmen spoke German.

<sup>1</sup> The number was then 220, and was therefore never to exceed 226. Turberville, *House of Lords in Eighteenth Century*, p. 4. See Grant-Robertson, *Select Statutes*, p. 208.

<sup>2</sup> Grant-Robertson, *England under the Hanoverians*, p. 83.

Hence the first two Hanoverian Kings were personally unfitted to direct English statecraft and too apathetic to wish to attempt so difficult a task. In addition, the long period of continuous Whig rule, the longer lives of Parliaments after the passing of the Septennial Act, and the long reign of Walpole, tended to give solidarity and stability to the Commons, to party administration and to the position of First Minister, and thus to make possible the development of some of the underlying principles of Cabinet Government.

Those principles Walpole did more than any other contemporary statesman to establish. After his downfall, those principles which had always been distasteful to the Whig oligarchs as well as to the Tory opposition were often recklessly set aside, just as the whole Cabinet System was challenged in the revival of the power of the Crown under George III. But while Walpole was in office, rules of Cabinet procedure were enforced which in many cases were not conclusively recognised until well into the nineteenth century. In the first place he retained in his own hands the power to direct the chief matters of State and to make nominations to the chief offices. His determination to have the final voice in State affairs greatly embittered his personal quarrel with Townshend, his colleague from 1721 to 1730, who wished to have absolute control of his Department, and hastened that Minister's resignation. Walpole had the confidence of the King, and, together with the Chancellor and the two Secretaries of State, carried on the bulk of State business. Hence he, in fact, held the post of Prime Minister even though he would have repudiated the name. Moreover, he insisted on Cabinet unity and met irresponsibility with severe discipline. He had emphasised this at his own expense in 1717, when he had refused to continue in office on finding himself unable to agree with his leader, Stanhope. In 1725 he dismissed the Duke of Roxburgh, the Secretary of State for Scotland, for his opposition to the tax on ale; and in 1733, after the defeat of the Excise Scheme, Lord Chesterfield and three officials of the Household were dismissed for hostility to the Chief Minister. The opposition of subordinates was not to be tolerated, for Lord Cobham

Walpole upholds the principles of

the supreme power of the First Minister,

the corporate responsibility of the Cabinet,

and the dependence of Cabinets upon the Commons.

and the Duke of Bolton were deprived both of their Commissions in the King's Regiments and of their Lord-Lieutenancies. This was an approach to a "spoils system," and was hated not only by the English public but also by the King, who looked askance on this invasion of his power. Finally, Walpole emphasised the dependence of Cabinets upon the Commons. Unlike Harley and St John, the leaders of Anne's reign, Walpole declined to enter the Lords while still in power, though it is curious to see him after 1739 not only neglecting an adverse vote of the Lords but trying to stand on the King's support against the rising opposition of the Commons. It was, however, to this opposition that Walpole finally bowed.

The development of religious toleration

It is of some importance to notice the development of religious tolerance in this period. This was caused by the entry of the tolerant Whigs into power, the constant possibility of a Stewart Restoration and the consequent need for satisfaction within the country. The Whigs repealed those monuments of Tory intolerance—the Schism and Occasional Conformity Acts—in 1719; but their persistent proposals to modify the Test and Corporation Acts<sup>1</sup> did not materialise. Statesmen, especially Walpole, saw that to withdraw those Acts would be to arouse the full force of Tory enmity against the Government and perhaps to convert it into disloyalty to the Hanoverian Succession; for the attachment of the Tories to the principle of the legal exclusion of Nonconformists from politics stood between them and a restoration of the Stewart dynasty. The Whigs had to be content with the Indemnity Acts, which were passed from 1727 onwards; these, in particular cases and by a special vote of Parliament, freed Nonconformists from the penalties incurred by their entry into Parliament. Apart from the continuance of the Anglican monopoly of political power, however, there was religious peace: Roman Catholics and non-Jurors even enjoyed comparative security, except when their estates were heavily taxed after Atterbury's Plot of 1721. On the whole, religious intolerance was dormant during this period, but tolerance was accompanied by a loss

<sup>1</sup> Made in 1719, 1730, 1732, 1734, 1736, 1739

of religious fervour, and was dictated by the political need for peace within the country. Toleration rested on political expediency rather than on genuine conviction.

In this period, from 1714-42, two facts had been of outstanding importance—the change of dynasty and the entrance of the Whigs into power. The accession of George I meant that the danger of a Stewart Restoration was never far distant: open rebellion, plotting and secret discontent had constantly to be faced, hence peace at home and abroad were essential; financial commitments and taxation had to be restricted to prevent unnecessary hardship, trade had to be expanded to produce prosperity and contentment; in politics and religion a policy of strict moderation had to be pursued to avoid dissension in the kingdom. Further, George I was dependent on Parliament, the conflict between the King and the Legislature came to an end and constitutional principles were developed. The rule of the Whigs was equally important: they represented mainly the commercial classes, and their policy laid emphasis upon the development of the trade of the country. though they hated France, yet their pockets successfully inclined them to peace. In religion they stood for toleration, and this strengthened the inevitable determination of the Government to conciliate the divergent parties in the country.

A Stewart  
restoration  
is prevented

National  
prosperity  
is developed

Parliament  
and the  
Whigs be-  
come su-  
preme



## CHAPTER III

### PITT AND THE STRUGGLE FOR CANADA

In the War of the Austrian Succession Britain begins her contest with France for colonial supremacy

THE outbreak of war in 1739 ended the era of peaceful commercial development and opened that of desperate struggle for maritime and commercial supremacy. England's advancing interest in the expansion of her trade and in the security of her sea-power had entered into the Treaty of Utrecht, but she had demanded chiefly European concessions. Gradually, however, America had become of greater importance as a market for England's exports, as one of her chief sources of supply, and as an employer of her shipping. Now the time had come for an open conflict with the Bourbons for colonial power. As Pitt said in 1763, France was "chiefly, if not solely, to be dreaded as a maritime and commercial power"<sup>1</sup> Anglo-French friendship had been undermined by the signing of the Family Compact of 1733, it was now replaced by open hostility.

The opposition of Prussia to Austria

Whilst for England the period gains its unity from the persistent contest with France for colonial and commercial supremacy, the same period in Europe gained its unity from the equally persistent hostility of Austria to Prussia. In both the Wars of the Austrian Succession and the Seven Years' War, England was opposed to France and Austria to Prussia, but in the first, England was the ally of Austria and in the second, the ally of Prussia.

The Anglo-Austrian alliance broke down after 1748, the traditional Hanoverian policy came to an end, the advent of Pitt became a guarantee of purely nationalistic policy, and George's repudiation of the Convention of Kloster-Zeven (1757) made his firm, but highly unconventional, alliance with Prussia against Austria inevitable. Whilst British interests had never been subordinated to Hanover,

<sup>1</sup> Hotblack, *Chatham's Colonial Policy*, p. 49 Pitt on Prelims. of Peace, 1763

the Electorate was now subjected to merciless suffering for England's sake.

Commercial grievances which had led to the brink of war as early as 1732 came to a head seven years later in the War of Jenkins's Ear. The English Assiento privilege of sending one ship only to Spanish America had been widely abused, for this one ship was regularly replenished outside a South American harbour from a small fleet of vessels which were thus in effect trading with Spanish territory even though they were never found in a Spanish port. An enormous illicit trade had sprung up between New England and New Spain so that it was reckoned that the English trade, which was legally proscribed, was as great as that of Spain which was legally permitted.<sup>1</sup> Spain therefore quite reasonably claimed a right of search, which, however oppressively exercised, was a legal and justifiable effort to prevent flagrant abuses of her monopoly of colonial trade. By 1738, however, both countries were ready for an amicable settlement, and thanks to the ability of Walpole the Convention of Pardo was accepted the next year. Spain agreed to give compensation for her wrongful searches, and the South Sea Company, which controlled the English trade, was to pay to the Spanish Crown £68,000 in settlement of the claim for evasion of duties.<sup>2</sup> This statesmanlike pacification was wrecked on the one hand by Spain's refusal to pay before the Company's money had been received, and, on the other, by the violent agitation of the English opposition, the Company and the pamphleteers, war broke out, therefore, in November, 1739.

The War of  
Jenkins's  
Ear, 1739

The War had been in process for only a year, Porto Bello had been taken, but Admiral Vernon had not yet failed in his attempt to capture Cartagena, when the struggle became merged in a great European outburst. The Emperor Charles VI had died in October, 1740, and Frederick the Great, repudiating the Pragmatic Sanction, invaded Silesia in December: George II, cherishing not only Hanoverian loyalty to the Emperor, but also his personal hostility to his

The War of  
the Austrian  
Succession  
opens, 1740

<sup>1</sup> Hotblack, *Chatham's Colonial Policy*, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Von Ruville, *William Pitt*, vol. 1., p. 156

arrogant nephew, Frederick the Great, gave the support of England to Maria Theresa. The foremost claimant of the Habsburg Dominions and the chief aspirant to the Imperial title was Charles Albert of Bavaria, who was now supported by France and Prussia because both these Powers wished to see the Austrian possessions partitioned to their own advantage. This feud between Austria and England on the one hand and Prussia and France on the other<sup>1</sup> was complicated by a recurrence of hostility between Elizabeth Farnese and Austria. Elizabeth, having established Don Carlos in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies by the Treaty of Vienna of 1738, now designed to win for her younger son, Don Philip, a duchy in Northern Italy at the expense of Austria,<sup>2</sup> and she therefore advanced the claim of Philip V of Spain, her husband, to the whole Habsburg Dominions. The centre of the War of the Austrian Succession was clearly European, but the real interest of England was the naval and overseas conflict with France and Spain, for English trading and colonial aspirations were already leading to fierce rivalry and some sharp conflicts in America, the West Indies and in India. In 1746 both Pitt and Bedford, then First Lord of the Admiralty, were urging an attack on Quebec, the latter advocating this as advantageous to our trade, as a step towards the security of our colonies and as a blow against the commercial and naval position of France.<sup>3</sup> The statement of the Earl of Chesterfield is also significant that "our new acquisition of Cape Breton is become the darling object of the whole nation: it is ten times more so than ever Gibraltar was"<sup>4</sup>

The early  
stage of the  
War.

The War "produced few very obvious results: it has no heroic figures except Frederick and Maria Theresa; its generals, except Frederick and perhaps Daun and Marshal Saxe, were second-rate and the contemporary politicians were

<sup>1</sup> Note that England was never officially at war with Prussia, and France did not formally declare war on England until 1744.

<sup>2</sup> Don Philip was established in the Duchy of Parma, which was ceded by Austria, in 1746.

<sup>3</sup> Hotblack, *Chatham's Colonial Policy*, p. 46.

<sup>4</sup> Earl of Chesterfield to Robert Trevor, August 13, 1745. Cited from Leadam, *Polit. Hist. of Eng.*, vol. ix, p. 390.

mostly as obscure as they were untrustworthy."<sup>1</sup> The first phase of the War ended with the signing of the Treaty of Breslau in 1742, by which Carteret, the able and energetic English Secretary of State, detached Prussia and Saxony from the alliance against Austria. He further endeavoured to effect a Peace between Bavaria and the Empress, and thus to isolate France and Spain unfortunately Maria's ambitions formed an insuperable obstacle to his plans, with the result that the War shortly took a new and more formidable turn. In 1744 Carteret fell from power.

France, alarmed at the Treaty of Worms (1743), which had attached Sardinia to the side of Austria and England, and having concluded the Second Family Compact with Spain in the same year, entered as a principal into the struggle. The Compact had guaranteed the Spanish position in Italy, and France promised to assist Spain in the recapture of Minorca and Gibraltar and in the abolition of the Assiento privileges granted to England. France declared war on Austria and England (1744), planned an invasion of Britain and entered upon a highly successful campaign in the Austrian Netherlands. Prussia reopened hostilities against Austria in defence of her newly acquired province of Silesia. By 1745, however, events were again moving languidly towards peace: England had been forced to recall her troops from Europe owing to the rebellion of the Young Pretender, Prussia had made her peace with Austria; Maria's husband, Francis, was elected Emperor, and Ferdinand VI, having succeeded to the throne of Spain (1746), withdrew all Spanish troops from Italy. In 1748 the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle ended the War. Prussia was left in possession of Silesia, but all other conquests were restored. Don Philip was established in Parma and Piacenza, the Protestant Succession in England was guaranteed and the Assiento confirmed. Of the right of search which had loomed so largely at the beginning of hostilities between England and Spain no mention was made. The Assiento was renewed for four years, and two years later all claims under the Assiento

The later  
stages of the  
War

<sup>1</sup> Lodge, *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Diplomacy*, 1740-48, p. 1.

Treaty were surrendered for £100,000, and English trade in the Spanish Indies came to an end.<sup>1</sup>

The Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle is unsatisfactory

From the outset the Treaty was unsatisfactory: it settled nothing, it offered a solution neither of the burning animosity of Prussia to Austria nor of the maritime and colonial feud between England and the Bourbon Powers. In Canada the French were taking steps which would have made the position of the English colonists untenable, and skirmishes between the two nations were inevitable. In India the struggle between the two rival Companies, which had begun in the War of the Austrian Succession, had never come to an end. Conflicts between the ships of English and French merchantmen were unavoidable, and by Christmas, 1755, 300 French merchant ships and 6,000 French sailors were carried into English ports,<sup>2</sup> and in the same year a skirmish between Boscawen, the English Admiral, and part of a French squadron led to a rupture of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

The beginnings of the Diplomatic Revolution

But both France and England were reluctant to resume the War under the old conditions, and hence there came about the Diplomatic Revolution. The result of this was to end both the Habsburg-Bourbon hostility and the Austro-English amity which had descended from the days of the English Revolution. The deeper hostilities between England and France on the one hand, and of Prussia and Austria on the other, remained, but England now became the ally of Frederick the Great, and France the ally of Maria Theresa.

Austria dissatisfied with the English alliance

Between England and Austria, and between France and Prussia, a growing coolness and a corresponding tendency for England and France to exchange allies had been developing for a considerable time. England's conduct in the previous war had been profoundly unsatisfactory to Austria: not only had England constantly, and in the end successfully, urged Maria Theresa to surrender Silesia to Prussia in return for peace, but she had refused to support Austria's constant demands for compensation in other parts of Germany. To Austrian interests in Italy England had adopted an extremely

<sup>1</sup> *Camb. Hist. of Brit. Emp.*, vol. 1., p. 344

<sup>2</sup> Leadam, *Polit. Hist. of Eng.*, vol. ix., p. 435.

unfriendly attitude. She had become the ardent supporter of Sardinia, for whom, by the Treaty of Worms, she had secured uncompensated concessions from Austria and when Austria had proposed to establish Don Philip in Sardinian territory instead of in her own Italian Dominions, England had obstinately refused to permit it.<sup>1</sup>

Apart from this annoyance given by England to Austria in the War, their alliance had become of little value. England's ambitions were chiefly opposed to those of France, and were to be realised in the colonies and at sea: the chief function of the Austrian Alliance was merely to preserve the Netherlands and to protect Hanover. Austria, on the other hand, with little interest in sea-power and none in colonies, could gain little from English support since England steadily refused to countenance Austrian designs on Prussia's latest acquisitions. As Kaunitz<sup>2</sup> rose to power in Austria, he became definitely occupied with reasserting her position in Germany, and cared little either for the Netherlands or for Austrian possessions in Italy. He was therefore not prepared to receive favourably George II's proposal to renew the Barrier Treaty, and this was a prominent cause of the breach between England and Austria. By that Treaty Holland had been allowed to garrison eight forts on the frontier between France and the Austrian Netherlands, three-fifths of the expense being borne by Austria and the rest by Holland. These defences had never been satisfactorily maintained, and during the War of the Austrian Succession French troops had crossed the frontier, overrun the Austrian Netherlands and invaded Holland. Austria now declared that the Treaty was therefore dissolved, and she refused to renew it unless her own complete sovereignty over the Barrier was recognised.<sup>3</sup>

The Austrian alliance ceases to serve the interests of Great Britain

Austria, meanwhile, began to see that France would be a more reliable and a more useful ally than England. This

<sup>1</sup> Lodge, *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Diplomacy*, p. 374

<sup>2</sup> Kaunitz was ambassador for Austria at Turin from 1742-44, her representative at Aix-la-Chapelle, and from 1750 till his retirement in 1792 her chief minister

<sup>3</sup> See *History*, October, 1930. Article on "The Maritime Powers in the Eighteenth Century," by Sir R. Lodge.

The growing  
friendship  
between  
Austria and  
France

had been the view of Kaunitz as early as 1749, he had received considerable encouragement from St Severin, the French representative at the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, and his view had been warmly endorsed by Saxony. He had visited France in 1750, and though he failed either definitely to win France or to attach Austria or Maria Theresa to his own policy, he paved the way for a future alliance. In 1755 he became Chancellor, and by that time Maria Theresa, becoming more and more dissatisfied with England, was ready to look with greater favour on his opinions.

Prussia is  
dissatisfied  
with the  
French  
alliance

Meanwhile, Prussia had grown almost equally discontented with her ally, France. Frederick the Great, an energetic and methodical ruler, could get little satisfaction from the vacillating, dilatory Court of the incapable Louis XV. He saw with ill-concealed irritation the growing friendship of Austria and France; and became openly alarmed at the warm reception given to Kaunitz in France. As early as 1748 Frederick had pointed out to Legge, the English Ambassador, the advantages of a Prussian Alliance, but Newcastle would hear nothing of any measure likely to lead to further difficulties with Austria, and Frederick's advances received little encouragement. Difficulties arose between the two countries regarding their rival claims to E Frisia, and also regarding the payment of compensation for damages done by the English fleet to Prussian merchants in the previous War. Soon, a change in the attitude of the English Court made possible the alliance for which Frederick was looking.

England still  
anxious  
for  
peace in  
Europe

Although events were tending inevitably towards the reversal of alliances, the actual accomplishment of the Diplomatic Revolution was largely fortuitous, and the result of circumstances as much as of the deliberate intent of any of the parties concerned. To understand the somewhat complicated diplomatic events which follow, it is essential to keep constantly in our minds that England realised the inevitability of a struggle with France and wished at all costs to avoid entangling herself in a continental war. Her object was simply to leave herself free to

deal with the maritime and colonial power of France by maintaining peace in Europe and the neutrality of Germany. On the other hand, though he did not wish for war, Frederick saw that a struggle with Austria was unavoidable, and being afraid of Russia, he wanted to secure his own position by the best alliances he could obtain.

In September, 1755, Russia, the firm ally of Austria since 1746, ever on the alert against Prussian designs, entered into a Treaty of Alliance with Great Britain, which was at that time in difficulties with Frederick. England, in her turn, seeing war with France imminent, and not yet at all ready to abandon the Habsburg friendship, sought to protect herself by a further alliance with Austria. This, however, Maria Theresa would only concede on terms which would have made war in Germany certain—the one thing England wished to prevent. Thereupon England took a new step to enforce peace in Eastern Europe, by negotiating with Prussia. Her statesmen, misled by optimism, thought to prevent war between Prussia and Austria by defending Prussia with a British alliance, and in the course of the negotiations they paraded before Frederick's eyes the Anglo-Russian Treaty. Frederick seized the bait, thinking to gain English influence at the Russian Court, and in case of hostility with the Czarina, to have English support. Thus the Convention of Westminster (January, 1756), by which England gained the alliance with Prussia, was essentially a pacific measure, by which England sought to avert war in Europe and by which Prussia, on her side, thought to provide against Russian suspicions. England had not the remotest intention of breaking off her friendship with Austria, nor had Prussia as yet any design to oppose France.

The alliance  
of Russia  
and England

leads to an  
alliance be-  
tween Great  
Britain and  
Prussia

The effect of the Convention of Westminster, however, quickly belied the intentions of both England and Prussia. Austria, long thirsting for war, could not quietly accept an attempt to prevent her from attacking Prussia. She immediately refused to join a pact to which Prussia was a party, and France, unable to detach Prussia from the English side, forthwith made overtures to the Empress which ended in the

Austria be-  
comes the  
ally of  
France



signing of the First Treaty of Versailles (May, 1756). On the side of France, this also contained no intention of precipitating a war, for it was a purely defensive Treaty in effect, France, in return for a promise of Austria's neutrality in any conflict she might have with England, would support Austria in the event of Prussia making war on her

The opening of the Seven Years' War and the completion of the Diplomatic Revolution

Only a few days after the conclusion of the First Treaty of Versailles, war between France and England had begun. In September, Frederick the Great, knowing that war with Austria was inevitable, and realising the importance of the first blow, opened his attack on Saxony. This was the final stroke necessary to the completion of the Diplomatic Revolution, for the daughter of Augustus III of Saxony had married Louis XV's son, and in May, 1757, France therefore concluded an offensive and defensive alliance with Austria by the Second Treaty of Versailles. This had been shortly preceded by the new alliance of Austria and Russia (February, 1757). Thus the reversal of alliances was complete, and England and Prussia were committed to the critical struggle with France, Austria and Russia.

Pitt takes office, 1756

So far as England is concerned, the history of the Seven Years' War is largely an account of the career of William Pitt. The blundering laxity of Newcastle's Government<sup>1</sup> could not meet the strain of a great war; Pitt came into his short period of office (October, 1756-April, 1757), and though he was driven out, through lack of Parliamentary resources, he was recalled and remained in power till the war was won though not concluded (July, 1757-October, 1761). As he himself said, "he borrowed the Duke of Newcastle's majority to carry on the business of the country"<sup>2</sup>.

His early life

William Pitt was the son of an eminent city merchant, and a grandson of "Diamond" Pitt, a former Governor of

<sup>1</sup> Note Newcastle as a statesman does not merit the condemnation he has frequently received, his policy was generally correct, but his Government was hesitant, irresolute and divided. His abilities are ably defended by Von Ruville, *Life of Pitt*.

See also *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, vol. xii (1897), p. 448 seq. (B. Williams, *Duke of Newcastle and Election of 1734*). *Trans. of Roy. Hist. Soc.*, fourth series, vol. xiv. (1931), p. 18. (Lodge, *Mission of Henry Legge to Berlin*, 1748), and Namier, *Structure of Politics at Accession of George III*.

<sup>2</sup> Green, *William Pitt*, p. 101.

Madras, under the East India Company. He was born at Westminster in 1708, and at the age of twelve proceeded to Eton, the school of many of the chief eighteenth-century ministers. In 1726 he entered Trinity College, Oxford. Probably owing to ill-health, he left the University without a degree, and completed his education by travelling on the Continent. Early friendships with the Lytteltons brought him into contact with Viscount Cobham, through whose influence he was able to secure a cornetcy in the Life Guards.

At the age of twenty-seven he entered Parliament, when his brother Thomas, having been returned for two boroughs, chose to sit for Okehampton, and allowed him to stand in the new election at Old Sarum, a notable pocket borough. Pitt immediately became allied to the Opposition which centred round the Prince of Wales and drew its inspiration from Bolingbroke. As a leading opponent of Walpole, he took a considerable hand in his overthrow, and sat on the Committee which investigated his conduct while in office. The reconciliation of the Prince with George II broke up the Opposition and left Pitt in isolation, whilst a legacy from the Duchess of Marlborough put him in a position of greater independence, and made it the more necessary for the Pelhams to attach him firmly to their side. When the King refused to admit Pitt to office the Pelhams resigned in a body, and Pitt was thereupon made Vice-Treasurer of Ireland (1746), a post which gave him no seat in the Cabinet. Pitt had distinguished himself by his sparkling oratory, rather than by any striking intellectual ability. He had attacked Walpole for abandoning Austria, he abused Carteret for subservience to Austria, but he won the applause of the House on both occasions. His admission to office was due to his friendship with the Pelhams, to his oratorical brilliance, the support of the Whig oligarchy, and the favour of the noisy section of an unrepresentative Parliament.

He becomes  
a member of  
the Opposi-  
tion

Shortly after his admission to office Pitt relinquished the Vice-Treasurership of Ireland and became Paymaster of the Forces. Having entered the Government, he showed his gratitude by unswerving loyalty, even approving those subsidies to Austria which, as an Opposition orator, he had

His conduct  
while in  
minor office

so recently condemned. But to a man of ambition minor office could give no permanent satisfaction, and when Newcastle let slip opportunities of making him either Secretary of State or Treasurer, he reverted to his former opposition. Frederick, Prince of Wales, had died in 1751, and Pitt attached himself (about 1755) to the Princess of Wales and her son, Prince George (later George III). Such factious opposition could not be tolerated, and Pitt was dismissed. In October, 1756, he became Secretary of State, under the nominal leadership of the Duke of Devonshire. After the short Ministry, which came to an end in the following April, he returned to office in July, 1757, under the leadership of Newcastle.

His character

However mischievous much of Pitt's early factiousness, however repulsive to us his election for a rotten borough and his initiation to office through the influence of a selfish Whig oligarchy, there can be no doubt that Pitt was a great statesman as well as a popular politician. He had been ambitious, selfish, factious and domineering, he had employed all the resources of the Opposition orator without revealing any marked ability either as a political thinker or as a minister in minor office. None the less, with a tall and graceful figure, his hawked nose and piercing eye to torture an opponent and to win a friend, and his melodious and theatrical voice to command attention, he had already established himself as a man of note. He had an acute perception for the striking, pithy statement, behind which lay a certain crispness, if no great depth, of thought, and a keen eye for a dramatic incident or a sensational pose. Of him Lord Cobham said that "in a very short quarter of an hour he can persuade any man of anything"<sup>1</sup>. Nowhere, perhaps, could his intentional pursuit of the dramatic be better illustrated than in his appearance to speak on the Peace of 1763 when he entered the House, "borne in the arms of his servants, in invalid attire, his legs swathed in flannel. He was set down within the bay but with the assistance of some friends and of a crutch, reached his seat."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Camb. Mod. Hist.*, vol. vi, p. 394

<sup>2</sup> Von Ruville, *Pitt*, vol. III., p. 86

The secret of Pitt's power lay in that, however ambitious, however factious, he was nevertheless high-souled, inspired by lofty ideals and indomitable enthusiasm, and moved by a violent and irrepressible passion for his country. He sought for office, not for the lucrative perquisites of it—those he resolutely refused—but because he sincerely believed “he could save this country and that nobody else could.” Such was his passionate devotion to England that he convinced his countrymen not only of his ability to control their destiny but also of their own ability to fulfil it. He “spoke like a gentleman, like a statesman, who felt what he said and possessed the strongest desire of conveying that feeling to others for their own interest and that of their country.”<sup>1</sup>

However serious the blots upon Pitt's early career—and those blots are neither few nor inconsiderable—the statesmanlike conception of his policy and the permanent results of his political sagacity during his short Ministry admit of no doubt. From the outset, the primary object of his plans was the acquisition of Canada and the complete destruction of the maritime and colonial power of France. To Pitt Canada represented, on the one hand, the natural complement and the undoubted guarantee of the British Empire in America, and on the other, the centre of French colonial and commercial ambitions. Under Walpole Pitt had learned England's dependence on trade and the consequent value of the American colonies; he had learned to appreciate that the days of the Mediterranean's paramount importance were over and that the maritime rivalry of England with France would be fought out across the Atlantic. He had lived long enough in opposition to see that the struggle in Canada had begun, he realised that this was a contest for America as well as Canada, and he was resolved never to leave the issue in doubt. As early as 1742 he had drawn up a series of notes on the Spanish Colonies;<sup>2</sup> he had collected information from the Society of London Merchants trading to

The chief object of his policy—the conquest of Canada

His preparation for the Canadian struggle

<sup>1</sup> Memorials of John Oswald, 1895. Cited from Green, *William Pitt*, p. 26

<sup>2</sup> Hotblack, *Chatham's Colonial Policy*, p. xiii

Virginia and Maryland, and had begun to obtain statements regarding America from the captains of merchant ships<sup>1</sup> As early as 1747 a French Ministerial official had written. "They would rule the seas through their fleets and the land through their wealth, and America would furnish them with the means of dictating to Europe"<sup>2</sup> The King's Speech significantly enough, in October, 1756, at the time of Pitt's First Ministry, contained the statement that "The succour and preservation of America cannot but constitute a main object of my attention and solicitude, and the growing dangers to which our colonies may stand exposed from the late losses in those parts demand resolutions of vigour and despatch"<sup>3</sup> Two years later Choiseul said: "The true equilibrium depends in reality on Commerce and on America. The German War . . . will not prevent the evils that are threatened by the great superiority of the English on the Sea"<sup>4</sup> Hence though Pitt himself in 1763, when debating the Peace proposals and urging the country to stand by Frederick the Great, stated that America was being won on the plains of Germany, he himself fully realised that the essence of his policy had been to concentrate on the capture of America, and that however important the continental war, he had always held it subordinate to the war across the Atlantic. This contest on the Hudson had become inevitable, and Newcastle had already appreciated its importance, but it was Pitt who made the capture of Canada the primary consideration of a far-sighted and comprehensive plan of campaign.

He subordinates European campaigns to the conquest of Canada

The British fleet must isolate the French colony in Canada

To bring about the overthrow of French power in America, it was essential to sever the connection between France and her colonies by crushing her fleet Moreover, the destruction of her maritime power was a chief object of Pitt's policy, and one of his chief complaints regarding the Peace of 1763 was that it gave to France the means "of becoming once more formidable to us at sea"<sup>5</sup> Pitt therefore resolved to

<sup>1</sup> Hotblack, *Chatham's Colonial Policy*, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> *Camb. Mod. Hist.*, vol. vi, p. 412

<sup>3</sup> Corbett, *England in Seven Years' War*, vol. 1., p. 150

<sup>4</sup> Choiseul d'Hauricourt, March 21, 1759. Flasseon, *Diplomatie Française*, vol. vi, p. 160 Cited from Green, *William Pitt*, p. 145

<sup>5</sup> *Parli. Hist.*, vol. xv, p. 1266 Cited from Beer, *British Colonial Policy*, 1754-65, p. 155.

use the English fleet to cut the naval communications between France and North America, and thus to prevent assistance reaching Canada from the Continent and the benefits of colonial trade from reaching France. Finally, having secured Canada and the defeat of the French navy at Lagos and Quiberon Bay, he was able, by blockading the remnants of the fleet, to prevent their reassembling and to paralyse French trade.

Though the statement that America was won on the fields of Germany was false in that it ascribed to the continental war a primary, instead of a secondary, position, it contains the truth that the German war formed an integral part of Pitt's policy. Pitt realised that Canada would be deprived of every ounce of strength which France could be led to put into the conflict with Prussia. Consequently he determined, by assisting Britain's continental allies, to make it inevitable that France should occupy her chief forces in Europe. Pitt, who while in Opposition would have allowed Hanover to be overrun rather than spend English money on her defence, now realised that should Hanover fall into the hands of the French, he could not hope to retain Canada even if he could conquer it. Over the diplomatic table, French representatives, holding the threat of retaining Hanover, would be able to force English Ministers to relinquish Canada. Therefore Pitt, who had so frequently and so violently denounced the subsidising of German Allies, now became responsible not only for the continuation but for the extension of that very policy. But this he did, not to preserve the Balance of Power in Europe, but, by preventing France from defending her colonies, to make the fall of Canada inevitable and the retention of it certain. As he himself said, "As Germany had formerly been handled, it had been a millstone round the neck of France."<sup>1</sup> There is therefore the warmest possible defence of Pitt's adoption of the subsidising policy in the tragic statement of the French Minister to the faithful and energetic General Montcalm in Canada that "it was necessary to concentrate all the strength of the kingdom for a decisive operation in

Pitt adopts  
the sub-  
sidising  
policy

to occupy  
French  
armies in  
Europe

and to leave  
the French  
Canadians  
without  
support.

<sup>1</sup> Corbett, *England in the Seven Years' War*, vol. 11, p. 228

Europe; therefore the aid required could not be sent and the King trusted everything to his zeal and generalship."<sup>1</sup>

Pitt also  
organises  
raids on the  
French  
coast

Pitt supported his main campaign also by coastal attacks on France and by raids on rich but outlying French colonies. He planned repeated descents on the French coast and defended this expensive and apparently unsuccessful policy by claiming that these raids had occupied 30,000 Frenchmen. Certainly these were irritating distractions to the French Government, which already had on hand campaigns in Canada, on the Rhine, and in Eastern Germany. He organised attacks upon the rich French colonies in Western Africa. He took the opportunity to attempt to crush French prosperity in the West Indies, for of Guadeloupe and Martinique he said, "The trade with these conquests is of the most lucrative nature and of the most considerable extent

and on  
French  
colonies

. and what is of equal weight, all that we gain on this system is made fourfold to us by the loss which ensues to France."<sup>2</sup> Further, he gave to the East India Company all the assistance possible in its rivalry with the French Company.

The unity of  
Pitt's plans.

Thus Pitt's schemes formed one brilliantly conceived policy for the acquisition of a great British Empire which would make the Mother Country supreme in commerce and in maritime power. The days of Empire based on common sentiment and self-government lay far ahead in the dim and shadowy future, Pitt realised that colonies were profitable sources of supply and highly valuable markets, and he was resolved that England should be the proud possessor of the world's greatest colonies. France was his enemy because she had entered with vigour into the race for colonial power and because she defied England's maritime supremacy, and now Pitt determined to make English trade supreme in the world.

His plans are  
modified by  
the conquest  
of Canada

The successful conquest of Canada—Pitt's chief concern—by 1760 made him modify his plans. Whereas the naval warfare had previously been designed chiefly to cut off the

<sup>1</sup> Le Ministre à Montcalm, February, 1759, Parkman, II., p. 175. Cited from Green, *William Pitt*, p. 141.

<sup>2</sup> *Pitt on Prelims of Peace*, Thackeray, II., p. 17. Cited from Hotblack, *Chatham's Colonial Policy*, p. 68.

French colonies from their Mother Country, it was now directed to prevent entirely the revival of the naval power of France. Moreover, continental campaigns had hitherto been intended by Pitt merely to prevent France from attending to colonial affairs. They were now used to strike a decisive blow at France and to force her to a Peace which would secure to England the colonial acquisitions she had already made. Similarly attacks on the French West Indian Islands were now intended to acquire lands which could be used as diplomatic pawns at the Peace Congress and which would make it unnecessary for England to sacrifice any of her more highly prized gains. Previously all had been subordinated to the necessity of conquering Canada; now all was designed to hasten the Peace which would leave Canada in our hands. Hence Pitt was anxious to prevent the entry of Spain into the war, for it necessarily postponed the Peace, and widened a struggle that he was seeking to narrow.

Pitt's policy, brilliant in conception, was also efficiently administered. He had writhed under the cautious, uninvective conventionalism of Walpole, and had chafed under the vacillating inefficiency of the Pelhams, and in saying that he could save the country and that no one else could, he expressed no more than his sincere conviction. He was resolved, therefore, to establish himself in such a position as to bring the strategy and administration of the war under his direct control. He gathered information not merely from all official channels but also from captains of merchantmen and private traders, and as a result he was able to send out detailed advice to naval and military officers and colonial governors. Possessing more accurate information, whilst he could avoid leaving commanders overseas without instructions, he was also able to leave them without the obligation of slavish obedience to general and often out-of-date commands: he never robbed his officers of their right of initiation or immediate action, but he gave them detailed and scrupulously well-informed advice.

Pitt's able  
execution of  
his policy

He was resolved to have under his command men whom he could trust and, with his acute appreciation of character,

and his careful  
choice of  
men



he quickly selected men for the posts who were capable of filling them brilliantly as well as with efficiency. He looked askance upon the school of older men, reared under a Government which could send Braddock to destruction through insufficient preparation, and which could have Byng tried and shot<sup>1</sup> for refusing to take a risk which the timid Government itself had declined to take. He chose men of ability and daring, men with confidence in their country and in their minister. He selected Amherst and Wolfe, Howe and Forbes, for the American campaigns; he chose Saunders the Admiral and let the last choice of his career fall upon Rodney.

Pitt's supervision of British naval power.

Pitt had determined that the issue of the war depended upon the command of the sea. He therefore reserved to himself the task of sending instructions to the admirals direct so that Lord Anson, the First Sea Lord, was concerned primarily with the equipment and organisation of the navy, while Pitt himself supervised its disposition and strategy. He speeded up the strengthening of the fleet which had already begun under Newcastle and Anson, so that between 1752 and 1760, over 120 ships, representing over 80,000 tons of shipping, were added.<sup>2</sup> Pitt took care that the French fleet should be blockaded with such effect that adequate support of the colonies should be impossible, whilst the naval assistance which England gave to her land forces abroad was beyond reproach. Hence the watching of the Brest and Toulon fleets by Hawke was as important to the conquest of Canada as the action of Boscawen in the St Lawrence. The English fleet not merely saved the English coast from the danger of French attack, but also, by assisting overseas land forces and by defeating the French fleet in European waters, made the acquisition of overseas dominions certain.

<sup>1</sup> Minorca was attacked by the French in 1756, and Admiral Byng was sent to its relief. Met by the French fleet, he fought an indecisive action and sailed away, leaving Minorca to its fate with the result that shortly afterwards the French captured it. Byng was tried by court martial, found not guilty of cowardice, but guilty of not doing his utmost and was shot. He had been insufficiently supplied with men and ships and left with indefinite instructions. He had simply been made the scapegoat for the Newcastle Government.

<sup>2</sup> Von Ruville, *Pitt*, vol. II, p. 77.

Pitt also secured the efficient co-operation of the land and sea forces. To him "the army and the navy were the blade and the hilt of one weapon"<sup>1</sup>. When Louisburg was to be attacked in 1758, in order that Boscawen and the fleet should assist, he took the unprecedented step of releasing him from the regular duty of attending the convoy. In the next year, he ensured the loyal co-operation of Saunders with Wolfe; and Wolfe's successor fully testified to the success of the policy when he wrote. "I should be wanting in paying my due respects to the admirals and naval service if I neglected this occasion of acknowledging how much we are indebted for our success to the constant assistance and support received and the perfect harmony and correspondence which has prevailed throughout all our operations in the uncommon difficulties which the nature of this country in particular presents to military operations of a great extent, and which no army can in itself supply. The immense labour on the transportation of artillery stores and provisions, the long watching in boats, the drawing of our artillery even in the heat of the actions, it is my duty, short as my command has been, to acknowledge for that time how great a share the navy has had in this successful campaign"<sup>2</sup>. Even to the British forces in India, where Pitt could do far less than he might have wished, he carefully sent naval support.

Pitt secures  
the co-operation  
of the  
army and  
the navy

Pitt realised that the war was primarily colonial, and that its chief results would be obtained in the colonies. He therefore regarded as right that they should assist in the conflict. He realised, too, that colonial forces rarely welcomed the appearance of English regulars, even though they were fighting their battles; that there were frequent bickerings about relative ranks in the regular army and colonial levies and that Governors were therefore often both reluctant and unable to give adequate assistance. He set to work by tactful correspondence to win the confidence of the Colonial Governors, and to induce them to take up the cause of colonial defence, at the same time he sought to remove causes of

and the  
assistance of  
the colonies

<sup>1</sup> Corbett, *England in Seven Years' War*, vol 1, p 8

<sup>2</sup> Despatch of Townshend, Corbett, *England in Seven Years' War*, vol. 1., p 472.

friction, interfering with colonial trade only in so far as it directly assisted the enemy's resistance. He induced the colonies to raise forces and to provide the soldiers with clothing and pay, whilst the Crown gave them arms, ammunition, and provisions and made large contributions to the colonies for their expenses<sup>1</sup>. His policy was eminently successful, for Bougainville, aide-de-camp to Montcalm, the French commander in Canada, wrote "Canada had been saved thus far by the dissensions of the English colonies; but now, for the first time, they are united against her, and prepared to put forth their strength"<sup>2</sup>.

Pitt's organisation of the army

As a military organiser Pitt was indefatigable. From the outset he had determined that England should be placed in a position to fight her own battles. He took a leading part in the support of the Militia Bill in 1756, which was rejected, but another Bill was passed in June, 1757, in the interim between his first and second periods of office<sup>3</sup>. Lists of eligible men were to be drafted by parish authorities from which militiamen were to be chosen by lot for three years' service under the Lord-Lieutenants of the counties. With home defence provided for, Pitt prepared to employ the regular soldiers on overseas service and so to have adequate forces always ready for action. The reorganisation of the army was undertaken by the Duke of Cumberland: discipline was enforced, the idleness and luxury of officers were reduced, effective communication was established between the War Office and the commanders in the field. Pitt said: "We have no business with the conduct of the army, nor with their complaints one with another."<sup>4</sup> His policy was to restrain politicians from interfering in purely military matters and to encourage the army authorities to take advantage of their freedom from mischievous interference to devote their full attention to the effective execution of military tasks.

In the pursuit of colonial and commercial supremacy

<sup>1</sup> Beer, *British Colonial Policy*, 1754-65, p. 55

<sup>2</sup> Bougainville, *Memoire au Ministre*, December, 1758, Parkman, *11*, p. 175. Ex Green, *William Pitt*, p. 140

<sup>3</sup> See Grant-Robertson, *Select Statutes*, p. 230

<sup>4</sup> Fortescue, *Hist. of Brit. Army*, vol. II, p. 568

Pitt would shrink from no reasonable expense. In 1758 a treaty was concluded with Frederick the Great by which, in return for his maintaining in the field an army of 55,000 men, England paid to him £670,000 per year. This she did until 1760. But the actual subsidy was only a small fraction of the cost of the European War. whereas the national expenditure was rather less than £10,500,000 in 1756, by 1760 it was over £19,000,000, and in 1761 of £17,000,000 spent as military expenditure, between £6,000,000 and £7,000,000 were spent on the Continental War<sup>1</sup>. Such was the cost of winning America on the plains of Germany, yet few would doubt the soundness of Pitt's policy.

Pitt's  
liberal ex-  
penditure  
for the War

The thirteen English colonies covered the eastern littoral plain of what is now the United States to the west were the Alleghanies, ranging from 6,000 to 8,000 feet in height. These were an all but insuperable barrier to English colonial expansion westwards. North of the St. Lawrence was French Canada, the settlements of industrious colonists which began at the very commencement of the seventeenth century. In the mouth of the St. Lawrence was Louisburg, the base for all French designs on the English colonies; and near by Acadia, which until 1713 was under French rule, was still mainly French in sentiment, and which the French Canadians hoped to recover. Far to the south, and west of Georgia, was French Louisiana commanding the mouth of the Mississippi. The French plan of action was obviously to link up Canada and Louisiana, and Galissonière began about 1748 to pursue this policy by fortifying the line of the St. Lawrence. This chain of Lake fortresses would then be continued along the line of the Ohio, when the communication would be complete. Fort Frontenac was built in 1673, Fort Niagara about 1748, Fort Le Bœuf in 1753, and Fort Duquesne in 1754. The colonies were thus a mere "lisière (a narrow strip or border) to the sea, to which they (the French) could confine all our colonies and from whence they may drive us whenever they please."<sup>2</sup>

The position  
of the  
English  
colonies and  
the ambi-  
tions of the  
French

<sup>1</sup> Von Ruville, *Pitt*, vol. II., pp. 217-231-391

<sup>2</sup> Newcastle to Albemarle, September 5, 1754. *Charteris, Cumberland*, p. 125. *Ex Camb Hist of Brit Emp.*, vol. 1, p. 467

make a  
struggle  
inevitable

The position of the English colonists was thus rapidly becoming impossible. Shut in by the Alleghanies and the line of French forts behind them, further expansion was impracticable. Penetration into the interior had to be effected by the Mohawk Gap, but this would now lead into territory carefully watched by French forts and through land inhabited by the Six Nations. Peace was becoming difficult, for the French were slowly advancing from Canada down the river Richelieu to Lake Champlain, where early in the 'thirties they built Forts Crown Point and Ticonderoga. A French advance down the Hudson would end at New York and would sever the northern colonies from the rest.

The English  
colonies un-  
prepared for  
the struggle

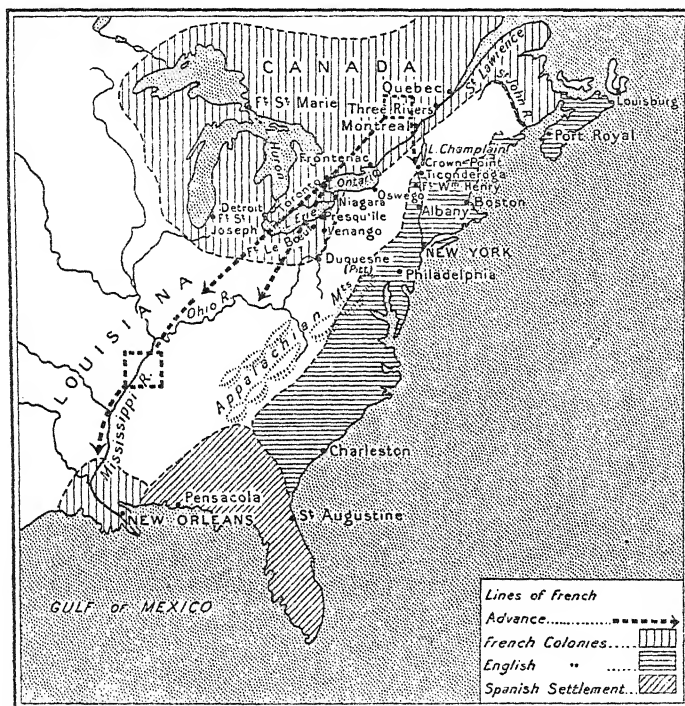
The English had done little to meet these dangers. They had contested the French advance along the Lakes by building Forts Oswego and Ontario, and the advance by Lake Champlain by erecting Fort William Henry, and they had already begun building on the site of Fort Duquesne when the French ejected them and built their own fort there. But the English forts were inadequate, and soon fell into disrepair, or were taken by the enemy as soon as war began. English traders established connections in the hinterland, even far into the Lakes and along the banks of the Mississippi, but mutual jealousies prevented them from pursuing any sound plan of military defence. Further, while the French had taken the precaution to make the firm friendship of the Indian tribes of the hinterland, the English too often succeeded in embittering them.

Their lack  
of unity

The French numbered only about 80,000 whilst the English numbered almost 1,250,000,<sup>1</sup> but in the thirteen English colonies there was no central government and no central revenue, though both had been suggested between 1754 and 1756. The colonies frequently refused to co-operate even in the face of the French menace. In 1755, for instance, Johnson, the leader of the attack on Crown Point, was actually almost at an open feud with Shirley, the Governor of Massachusetts, the leader of the attack on Fort Niagara, and at the same time New York and Massachusetts were engaged in a boundary dispute which led to riot and blood-

<sup>1</sup> Green, *William Pitt*, p. 66.

shed. The colonies had been planted one by one, they had grown up in hardy independence and even suspicion of one another and they refused to unite, so that Franklin saw "one Assembly waiting to see what another will do, being afraid of doing more than its share, or desirous of doing less, or refusing to do anything because its country is not at



FRANCO-ENGLISH HOSTILITY IN NORTH AMERICA

present so much exposed as others or because another will reap more immediate advantage."<sup>1</sup>

As Loudoun, the English commander, said: "It was the constant study of every province here, to throw every expense on the Crown and bear no part of the expense of this war themselves."<sup>2</sup> The troubles with the Mother

The beginnings of friction with Great Britain,

<sup>1</sup> *Franklin Writings* (ed. Smyth), vol. iii., pp. 203-4. Ex Beer, *British Colonial Policy, 1754-65*, p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Loudoun to Pitt, May 3, 1757. *State Papers Colon., Amer.*, and *W. Ind.*, 85. Ex Beer, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

Country, which were soon to lead to the severance of the colonies, were already appearing. The colonies, becoming more industrial, began to feel the trade restrictions imposed upon them already. Governors, the nominees of the English Crown, found themselves obstructed, if not attacked, by the Colonial Assemblies.

the hardship  
inflicted  
upon the  
colonies by  
the war

The war brought to the colonies a particularly odious and burdensome interference with trade. Trade diminished because of the uncertainty inseparable from War and the increased dangers of maritime transit, but, in addition, the chief means of colonial trade were definitely prohibited by the Mother Country. Immediately on the outbreak of War, all trade between the colonies and French possessions became illicit: and this was a severe test to colonial loyalty, as Canada and the French West Indian Islands were a ready market for the export of foodstuffs, and the British North American colonies depended on the French West Indies for sugar, coffee and indigo.

and the cost  
of the  
colonial war-  
fare

While the colonies suffered in this way, they were at the same time called upon to face increased expenditure for the maintenance of the War. For instance, the cost to the colonies of the 1755 expedition was £170,000, to which England contributed £120,000,<sup>1</sup> and as a result of the War Connecticut had to meet a deficit of £70,000 or £80,000. Nor was it the mere burden of the expense which the colonies had to face, but still more the inequality of its incidence; for in the absence of any central revenue or even co-ordinated funds, the burden fell chiefly upon those colonies which took up the task most loyally and readily. For instance, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New York furnished almost 70 per cent of the colonial troops, though their population represented only about one-third of the total.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, Carolina, Maryland and Pennsylvania, further from the immediate danger, gave little assistance to the cause of colonial defence.

The colonies were irritated still more by the presence of the English regulars, especially when these, in the early

<sup>1</sup> Beer, *British Colonial Policy*, 1754-65, p. 53.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68

stages of the War, showed ineptitude for colonial warfare. The colonists, differing considerably in character and outlook from the regulars, were constantly involved in bickerings with them, disputes about the relative ranks of colonials and regulars added fuel to the fire of discontent.

Consequently the numerical superiority of the English was easily outweighed by the absence of efficient co-operation and this ruinous catalogue of grievances. This largely explains the repeated failures of the English in the early part of the War, and the protracted resistance of the French, and it proves also the genius of Pitt who, by doing so much to lessen the friction, made victory ultimately possible.

The advantages of the British colonies are apparent rather than real.

Friction between English and French in America had begun at least as early as the time of William III. In the War of the Austrian Succession the English colonists had seized Louisburg and were exasperated by its restoration at the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle. Animosity continued and increased between 1748 and 1756, and in 1755 the English colonials, led by Braddock, attempted to seize Fort Duquesne, and a second expedition made an onslaught upon Forts Niagara and Crown Point. All these efforts ended in dismal failure.

Early opposition between French and English colonies.

The outbreak of the Seven Years' War put an end to this period of unofficial hostility, only to increase the successes of the French. In 1756 they reduced Forts Oswego and Ontario, and in the next year, besides capturing Fort William Henry, they repulsed an English attempt to retake Louisburg. This, however, was the end of their victories, for Pitt now came into power and inaugurated the policy of success. In 1758, thanks to the co-operation of Boscawen with Amherst and Wolfe, and the more willing assistance of the colonists, Louisburg was at last taken. Though a further push to Quebec was postponed, and though Abercromby failed to take Ticonderoga, a subordinate of his reduced Fort Frontenac, and Forbes found Fort Duquesne destroyed by its defenders. In the next year, Amherst, advancing towards Quebec from the south, found Ticonderoga destroyed and captured Crown Point. A second force

The campaigns in Canada.



meanwhile reduced Fort Niagara, whilst the heroic efforts of Wolfe and Admiral Saunders led to the brilliant capture of Quebec—the climax of this great year of victories. Finally, in 1760, Montreal was taken.

Attacks  
made on the  
French West  
Indies

Pitt extended his plan of attack to include attempts on the French West Indian Islands. In 1759 the attack on Martinique, which Pitt designed to capture as a pledge for the restoration of Minorca, failed, but Guadeloupe was taken. In 1761 Dominica was captured, and Martinique, Grenada, and St. Lucia fell into British hands. The power of the French in the West Indies was broken and their prosperity destroyed. So important had the rich West Indies seemed to Pitt that he had allotted twelve ships of the line and twenty cruisers to his campaigns against them.<sup>1</sup>

and on  
French  
settlements  
in Africa

In his fight against the commercial and maritime power of France, Pitt did not fail to realise the value of French settlements in West Africa. In 1758 the expedition which he despatched reduced the French colony on the Senegal River and then captured Goree, by this means the whole of the French trade on the coast and in the interior fell into English hands, and the English slave trade was secured.

Hostilities  
in India

In the Far East lay another field for Pitt's activities, for in India the lucrative trade had become the stake in an eagerly-contested conflict between the English and French Companies. The disintegration of the Mogul Empire in the eighteenth century gave great scope to the ambitious schemings of European nations, and French intentions were pushed forward rapidly, especially while Duplex was Governor of the French station of Pondicherry. A great struggle ensued in the Carnatic as early as 1745, and in the War of the Austrian Succession, Madras fell into the hands of the French, only to be restored by the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle. Between 1748 and 1756, however, there was in India little cessation of the unofficial hostility between the English and the French: a disputed succession in the Carnatic enabled Clive to show his military genius at the siege of Arcot. This open conflict in the Carnatic was still continuing when the Seven Years' War broke out, and events

<sup>1</sup> Corbett, *England in the Seven Years' War*, vol. 1., p. 343.

soon led to further trouble in Bengal. Pitt would not lose an opportunity. Nevertheless, in India he could do little in the absence of even tolerable means of communication; the enormous distance of the journey made effective action for England impossible. In India the struggle was merely the war of two Companies, in which no English colony was involved. Pitt therefore could only support the Company with supplies, men and naval assistance, this he did vigorously, and therefore striking as were Clive's successes and those of Eyre Coote, Pitt could claim little responsibility or credit for them. Following the tragedy of the Black Hole of Calcutta, Clive's victory at Plassey established the power of the English in Bengal: in the South, Madras successfully withstood a siege from Lally, the French leader, the victory of Eyre Coote at Wandewash led to the capture of the French stations in the Carnatic, and finally the fall of Pondicherry was the end of the last important French garrison in India. Thus the Seven Years' War brought to England acquisitions which were to become scarcely less important than those in Canada. Pitt regarded affairs in India as an opportunity to injure French commerce, he gave lively support to the Company therefore, but refused to contract on behalf of the Government any liability for the administration of the country.

The chief support for the war in America lay in the activity of the British fleet. This had opened with the failure of Byng at Minorca, a failure memorable not because of the loss of the island, which was of little value to the French, but because of the wild outburst of alarm which carried the Admiral to his death. The work of the fleet during the next few years was to keep a close watch upon the French navy, upon whose support their colonies ultimately depended. In 1759, however, the French planned an invasion of England. But the English fleet was watchful, and when La Clue eluded his guard at Toulon, he was caught and crushed by Boscawen at Lagos. Shortly afterwards Hawke dealt the final blow to the fleet when he defeated Conflans at Quiberon Bay. It only remained for the English, by blockading the French, to prevent the re-formation of the French fleet and so to force France to terms.

The activities of the fleet

Lagos and Quiberon Bay

The war in  
Canada is  
supple-  
mented by  
the war in  
Europe

Pitt's successful campaign in Canada was largely conditional, moreover, on his ability to maintain the Opposition to France on the Continent. The success of Prussia's invasion of Saxony in 1756 was short-lived, for in the next year Frederick was heavily defeated at Kolin, and the defeat of the Duke of Cumberland at Hastenbeck led to his signing the humiliating Convention of Kloster-Zeven, withdrawing Hanoverian troops from the War. This Convention the English Government refused to ratify. Frederick's position, however, became almost desperate, and his victories at Rossbach and Leuthen were followed by his defeat at Hochkirch and Kunersdorf. The "army of observation" under Ferdinand of Brunswick did a good deal to engage the French, and in 1759 won a great victory at Minden. Though Berlin was occupied by the Austrians, Frederick continued the fight, and even defeated his enemies at Torgau.

Frederick of  
Prussia  
maintains  
his resis-  
tance to  
France and  
Austria

Thus in Europe victory alternated with defeat; Frederick suffered tremendous losses but refused to surrender. All praise is certainly due to him for the amazing skill and courage with which he maintained his obstinate defence against the overwhelming odds so constantly marshalled by France, Austria and Russia. The co-operation and able military resource of Ferdinand of Brunswick was undoubtedly of immense help to him. Without the subsidies, regularly paid by Great Britain, and without the unrelenting energy with which Pitt prosecuted the Continental War, the position of Frederick must have become untenable.

Pitt's power  
undermined  
by.

In October, 1761, however, Pitt disappeared from power as dramatically as he had entered. In the country, as in the smaller circle of politicians, there was a growing discontent with the continuance of the War. Mauduit's *Considerations of the Present German War*, which was hostile to Pitt's method of conducting it, went through six editions within a few months,<sup>1</sup> and the people were becoming increasingly hostile to apparently limitless expenditure of the country's resources.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, Pitt's Ministry had been so successful that further warfare seemed unnecessary,

1 popular  
opposition  
to continu-  
ance of the  
war,

<sup>1</sup> Corbett, *England in Seven Years' War*, vol. II, p. 148

<sup>2</sup> The War added £75,000,000 to the National Debt.

whilst his own refusal to give his whole heart to the pursuit of peace and the steady growth of his prestige and influence divided the Cabinet irreparably. The Tory opposition to a war, whose benefits went into the hands and pockets of the Whigs, increased from day to day. Newcastle grew more and more discontented as he found his influence overshadowed by his domineering colleague, and more and more insistent on the need for peace. Bedford, then Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and Hardwicke, a former Chancellor, sincerely believed that the time for fighting was over. Bedford wrote to Bute that "the endeavouring to drive France entirely out of any naval power is fighting against nature, and can tend to no one good to this country, but on the contrary must excite all the naval powers of Europe to enter into a confederacy against us"<sup>1</sup>. George III succeeded to the throne in October, 1760, and somewhat hesitatingly threw in his influence on the side of Pitt. His chief Minister, Bute, who entered the Cabinet as early as October, 1760, and who became Secretary of State early in the following year, was resolved that whatever happened his was to be the supreme place. He was determined therefore to lessen the power of Pitt, though not necessarily to drive him out of office.

2 his refusal to seek peace,

3 opposition in the Cabinet,

4 the rivalry of Bute

Whilst his position was becoming more and more difficult, Pitt made no effort to prevent his own overthrow; he made no concessions to the peace party; he openly sought to check Bute, and he refused to allow any slackening in the course of the War. Meanwhile from Spain a cloud had already arisen upon the horizon. Ferdinand VI died in 1759, to be succeeded by Charles III, ever an unrelenting opponent of English policy. Only too readily did he champion Spanish objections to the rigour with which English naval authorities treated neutrals. In August, 1761, he signed the Family Compact with France, by which he engaged to join in the War on May 1, 1762, unless peace had then been concluded between England and France. Of the actual Treaty Pitt probably knew little or nothing;<sup>2</sup>

Pitt insists on immediate war with Spain

<sup>1</sup> Corbett, *England in the Seven Years' War*, vol. II, p. 172

<sup>2</sup> On this subject see *Quarterly Rev.*, vol. CXC (1899), "Pitt and Family Compact." *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, vol. XXI, "The Retirement of

Pitt resigns  
and war is  
declared  
against  
Spain

yet he saw Spanish diplomacy united with France against England and realised that Spain had resolved on support of France and on opposition to England. He therefore demanded that England should declare war on Spain without delay, so that she might seize the treasure-fleet bound for Cadiz. To this his colleagues entered a cautious and moderate refusal: they would ply the Spanish Court further with diplomacy before resorting to arms. Pitt resigned. On December 26, 1761, the *Gazette* announced a state of war with Spain, and on January 4, 1762, war was formally declared. Pitt had destroyed his own power; for by his own obstinacy he had alienated his colleagues and made his retention impossible for George and Bute. It has been suggested that, being unwilling to press upon Frederick the Great the concessions inseparable from a sound peace, he resigned to make way for a Minister who would be unfettered by previous attachment to Prussia.

George III  
controls the  
Government

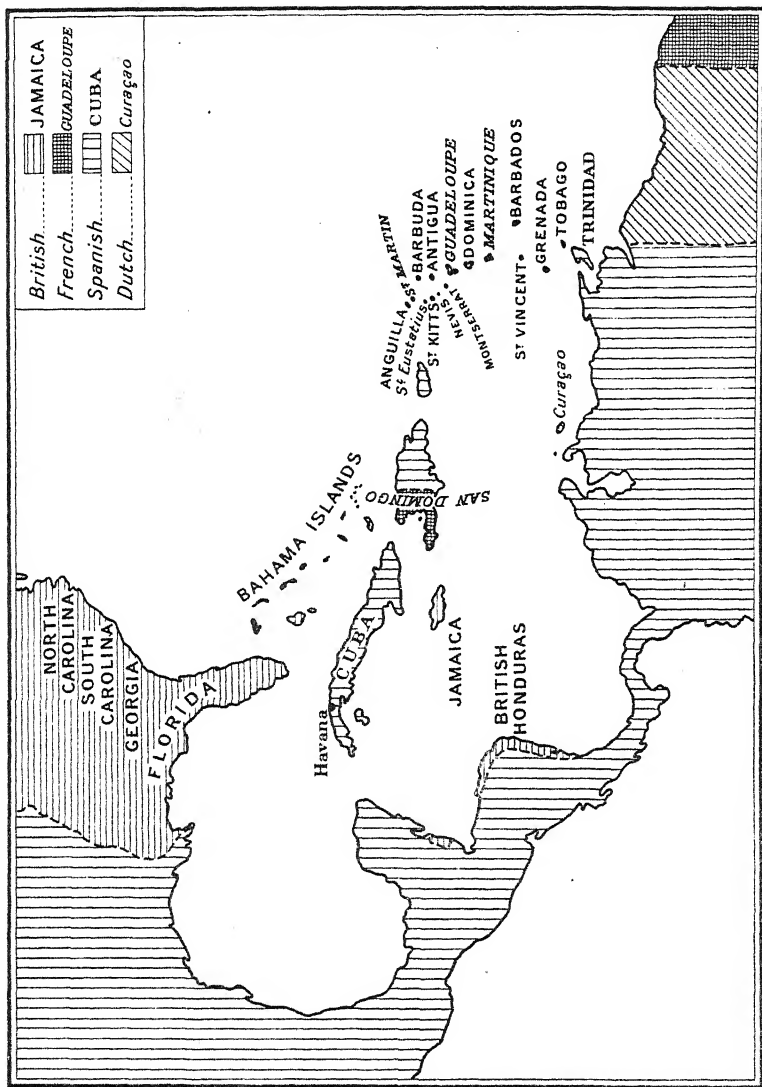
The plight  
of Prussia

Pitt had fallen, and though Newcastle remained, deceiving and being deceived till May, 1762, George and Bute had taken the reins of Government. The war dragged out its weary course till 1763. Frederick's position was becoming desperate. In November, 1760, he said, "You must regard me as lost in the coming year, should the war continue,"<sup>1</sup> and though he actually succeeded in holding his own in the fighting of 1761, the Austrians for the first time wintered in Silesia, and the Russians, still advancing, captured Colberg, an important seaport. Then, however, the death of the Czarina Elizabeth brought Peter III to the Russian throne, and he was so friendly with Prussia that he actually formed an alliance with Frederick. Though his assassination brought this to an end, Catherine II, who succeeded him, maintained a benevolent neutrality towards Prussia. On the other hand, Frederick, after the fall of Pitt, lost his chief ally and the subsidies which England had paid him since 1758.

Spain having entered the war, English troops were sent

Pitt'' Du Ruville, *Pitt*, vol. III, p. 404. Corbett, *op cit*, vol. II, pp. 180-96.

<sup>1</sup> Du Ruville, *William Pitt*, vol. II, p. 325.



THE WEST INDIES IN 1763



to invade Portugal, and France planned an invasion of England. Havana, the chief town of Cuba, Spain's treasured West Indian island, was, however, captured by the English and a fifth of the Spanish navy destroyed.<sup>1</sup> Such military and naval activities brought the war no nearer to an end, and more was to be expected from the negotiations of Bute and Choiseul. Negotiations for peace had been opened as early as 1759, and Frederick himself urged England to make peace in 1761. Negotiations in that year were so far satisfactory that Pitt and Choiseul had reached substantial agreement. Then, however, the close complicity of France and Spain, on the one hand, and the obstinacy of Pitt, especially in his demand for a monopoly of the Newfoundland fishery, on the other, together with the refusal of either France or England to abandon their allies, made final success impossible. Just before the fall of Pitt, negotiations were broken off, but ten days after his fall, Bute reopened them to more purpose, and by November, 1762, the preliminaries were signed. Early in the next year Prussia and Austria came to terms.

Action taken  
against  
Spain

Negotiations  
opened for  
peace

Peace is  
signed

By this treaty England regained possession of Minorca and her position in the Mediterranean was thus safeguarded: she retained Canada, yielding to France only two islands in the St. Lawrence and certain fishery rights off the Newfoundland coast, she also kept Florida and Louisiana, and the West Indian islands she had taken, except Martinique and St. Lucia. She thus restored the best of her West Indian islands to France as well as Belleisle and Goree, and all the French territory in India except five factories. Britain also returned Havana and Manila to Spain. In Europe, Frederick retained Silesia.

England's  
acquisitions

Great Britain surrendered much in return for the Peace; her success in the War justified a firmer attitude at the negotiations, and had Pitt still been in power, firmness would have been shown. Perhaps the greatest contemporary indignation was levelled at the abandonment of Frederick, for England made a separate peace, leaving him to make the best terms he could. In 1773 Frederick com-

Criticism of  
the Peace

The abandon-  
ment of  
Frederick by  
Britain

<sup>1</sup> Corbett, *England in the Seven Years' War*, vol. II., p. 282.



plained of "the indecent, I might almost say infamous way in which England treated him."<sup>1</sup> Yet he might have recalled his own suggestion of 1761 that England should make a separate peace. Moreover, since the fall of Pitt, he had shown himself a most intractable ally, always ready to follow his own course, and he had not only refused English mediation in his struggle with Austria, but had also shared in intrigues in England against the power of Bute. Further, England had overthrown the Coalition against which the Alliance had been primarily formed, and even to the end had used her diplomatic resources to secure favourable terms for him. So, though the British Government took its own course, and though the former good understanding with Russia had come to an end, it would be mere exaggeration to accuse it of deserting its ally. Frederick's real cause of complaint lay not in England's desertion of him, but in the way in which the abandonment was effected in the course of the protracted peace negotiations, Bute treated Frederick with unjustifiable suspicion and secrecy, rather than with the candour and frankness due to even a peevish ally.<sup>2</sup>

is justified,

but Bute's  
conduct is to  
be censured

England  
emerges tri-  
umphant

The success of Great Britain can hardly be overestimated. She had enhanced her prestige a hundredfold, she had overthrown French maritime power, and, as the result of the first serious struggle for colonial and commercial supremacy, had secured a dominant position. The chief glory of England's brilliant conduct of the War undoubtedly belongs to Pitt: he had dominated the stage of politics, and in four years of outstanding statesmanship had made acquisitions for English power of pre-eminent importance. In 1763, despite her hesitant irresolution at the Peace, England stood out as one of the chief commercial nations and as the first colonial power of the world.

<sup>1</sup> *Camb Mod Hist*, vol vi, p 422.

<sup>2</sup> For a careful analysis of the Peace of Paris, see Chapter XVII, *Camb. Hist. of Brit Emp*, vol. 1., by Dr H. M. V. Temperley.

## CHAPTER IV

### GEORGE III AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

ENGLAND had emerged from the Seven Years' War triumphant, but she had to face the necessity of a drastic adjustment of her relations with her American colonies. The overthrow of French power in Canada freed the colonists from their fear of attack, and the War had shown that the military and financial organisation of the Empire was inadequate. But the brilliant administration of Pitt was ended, a series of incompetent governments was to come, and he himself, by his obstinate opposition, hampered attempts to find a solution of colonial difficulties.

There were many underlying causes of friction between England and America. Assuming that colonies existed primarily for the advantage of the Mother Country, successive generations of English statesmen had built up the Old Colonial System. The American colonies were forced to supply for the English manufacturer raw materials and a market for his finished goods, and for the English merchant a constant demand for his services. They were to prevent England from being dependent on foreign countries, which in time of war might be her enemies, and to whom debts, even in time of peace, would have to be paid in specie; and they were to enable her to have so large an export trade as to show a considerable balance over her imports. The influence of this notion of the Balance of Trade was of the utmost importance, for it was held that "if the foreign commodities imported exceeded in value the native commodities exported, it is a manifest sign that the trade decayeth and the stock of the kingdom wasteth apace, because the overplus must needs go out in treasure."<sup>1</sup>

England faces the problems of colonial government

Causes of friction between Britain and the American colonies

1 The Old Colonial System

<sup>1</sup> Musselden "The Circle of Commerce, 1623," *Camb. Hist. of Brit. Emp.*, vol 1, p. 561.

(a) restriction of export trade,

Certain "enumerated" goods, such as tobacco, sugar, cotton, wool, indigo, ginger, molasses, rice, naval stores, copper and fur could be sent only to England, Ireland or an English colony. Export to another colony was discouraged by the imposition of a heavy export duty. Even those goods which were not enumerated had to be shipped to England before being sent to any foreign country, though Walpole had relaxed these restrictions in favour of colonial sugar and rice.

(b) of import trade,

The import trade of the colonies was equally restricted. No goods, other than British goods, might be imported unless they had first been shipped to England, where they paid customs duties and town or wharf dues. In 1733 heavy duties were placed on the importation into the British colonies of foreign sugar, molasses, and rum. These restrictions served the dual purpose, first, of increasing the volume of trade dealt with by British ports and incidentally thereby enhancing to some slight extent the revenue collected, and, secondly, of securing to British manufacturers a highly valuable market for their goods. Foreign ships, moreover, were forbidden to share in the colonial trade.

(c) prohibition of colonial manufactures

To complete the economic subjection of the colonies to the Mother Country, they were prevented from competing with British manufacturers. The colonies were to "be only employed in such things as are not the product of this kingdom."<sup>1</sup> In the interests of the British sugar-refining industry, raw sugar paid a duty of 1s. 6d. per cwt. when imported into England, but refined sugar paid a duty of 5s. per cwt. Colonial copper-smelting and hat-making were forbidden, and in 1750 it was enacted that the colonies should have no mills for rolling or splitting iron, no plating forges, and no iron furnaces. Thus the colonies were encouraged to supply the British manufacturer with the raw materials he needed, but they were not allowed to compete with his finished goods.

The effect of these regulations.

The task of measuring the effects of these trade restrictions with any real accuracy is a difficult one. The system of

<sup>1</sup> *Cal. of St. Pap., Col. Add.*, 1621-98, pp. 17-18, *Camb. Hist. of Brit. Emp.*, vol. 1, p. 573.

enumeration must certainly have hampered trade considerably, the volume of export trade must inevitably have been diminished by the prohibition of direct trade with the Continent,<sup>1</sup> the cost of imports must have been increased by the duties levied in England, and the restrictions upon colonial manufactures must have had some effect. These regulations affected chiefly those tropical goods which England herself could not produce, but which were produced for her by the southern colonies of America: the colonies, in fact, which took least part in the Revolution against England.

On the other hand, in practice the system was somewhat less oppressive than would at first appear. There were "drawbacks" on goods shipped into England and then withdrawn for foreign consumption: there were drawbacks of as much as 50 per cent. on goods imported via England. Further, there was a certain amount of evasion, especially of the Molasses Act, about which considerable difference of opinion exists.<sup>2</sup> Further, though laws were passed suppressing colonial manufactures, even after the middle of the eighteenth century this can hardly have been a serious cause of unrest, for there was little manufacture in the colonies owing to shortage of capital and the ability of the commercial and fishing interests to absorb such capital as was available. If England appeared a strict mother to her colonies, she wore in some instances at least the appearance of goodwill. British tobacco-growing was with difficulty suppressed, so that the colonies should have a monopoly of the tobacco trade. bounties were placed on colonial naval stores, iron and other products, though with little effect. Finally, if England was anxious to retain the monopoly of colonial trade, the colonies were scarcely less anxious to grant it. The colonies needed capital for trading: it

The hardships placed upon the colonies less serious than they appear

<sup>1</sup> For example, had direct export of sugar from the West Indies to Holland been allowed, profits would have increased by as much as 16 to 50 per cent. Pitman, *Devel of West Indies*, 1700-63, p. 181.

<sup>2</sup> As to the actual extent of the evasion there is considerable diversity of opinion. Compare Kerth, *Constit Hist. of First Brit Emp*, p. 341, with *Camb Hist of Brit Emp*, vol. 1., p. 644. See also Beer, *Old Colon System*, pp. 282-8. Pitman, *Development of West Indies*, 1700-63.

was from England that the colonists raised enormous credits for long periods, and the only possible way to repay these was by shipping goods to England. And indeed England was anxious that the colonies should prosper so that they might be in a position to absorb the products of a rapidly developing Mother Country

Colonial opposition to trade restriction develops very slowly

One thing at least is certain: whether from general satisfaction or from conservative observance of a well-established system, the Americans were extremely slow to engineer opposition to these economic restrictions. As late as 1765, Franklin could tell the Commons "The sea is yours you make it safe for navigation you keep it clear of pirates You are therefore entitled to some toll or duty on merchandise carried through the seas, towards the expense"<sup>1</sup> Even nine years later the Continental Congress was still saying: "We cheerfully consent to the operation of such Acts of the British Parliament as are *bona fide* restrained to the regulation of our external commerce"

The constitutional relation of the colonies to the Mother Country was another potential cause of discord or rupture. In 1763 "not even the most dismal Cassandra would have prophesied the approaching loss of half the empire,"<sup>2</sup> but under the stress of circumstances, and as a result of the obstinacy of the Mother Country, after 1763, rupture became probable. The original Americans had left England to escape either the political or the religious tyranny of the Stewarts, and in a land three thousand miles from Whitehall, untenanted by outworn traditions, they had developed their innate love of independence. Hitherto, though she firmly believed in her right to control her colonies, the Mother Country had hesitated to press her claims upon them. On their side, the colonists had steadily resisted anything they regarded as an encroachment upon their liberties by England.

2 The opposition of colonial governments to English influence and supervision.

In each of the colonies there was a Governor, a Council and a Popular Assembly. Except the Governors and Councils of Connecticut and Rhode Island and the Council of Massachusetts, all Governors and Councils were the nominees of the

<sup>1</sup> *Camb Mod Hist*, vol. vii., p. 182

<sup>2</sup> Van Tyne, *Causes of War of Independence*, p. 55.

English Crown or of English proprietors. The Governors, except those of Virginia, Maryland, Georgia, Carolina and the West Indies, were dependent upon the Assemblies for their salaries and they had no effective police or civil service, and little practical direction of military forces. These Governors were Englishmen, and it was asserted that they "often came to the Colonies merely to make fortunes," that they had "no estates there, nor any natural connections that should make them heartily concerned for their welfare."<sup>1</sup> Further, the Assemblies frequently adopted the course of appropriating supplies and appointing special officials, paid by themselves, for specific purposes, so retaining in practice full control of colonial policy. Though the Governor and the Board of Trade had the right to veto colonial legislation, only 5 per cent of it was actually disallowed.<sup>2</sup> The colonists had attempted to secure that judges should hold office during good behaviour, though this had been vetoed in Pennsylvania, North Carolina and New York. They also offered the most vigorous opposition to the jurisdiction of the Admiralty courts, which were free from colonial pressure, and in their own colonial courts they could easily secure juries who, whatever the opinion of the judge, were ready to bring verdicts flagrantly at variance with the evidence if the interests of the colonists demanded.<sup>3</sup> "The whole Colonial History is a story of the success of popular Assemblies shearing both Governor and Council of their authority."<sup>4</sup> It is with little surprise we find the Jamaica Assembly in 1753 voting "that it is the inherent and undoubted right of the representatives of the people to raise and apply money for the service and exigencies of the Government and to appoint such person or persons for the receiving and issuing thereof as they think proper."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Benj. Franklin to Gov. Shirley, December 4, 1754. Hotblack, *Chatham's Colon Policy*, p. 173.

<sup>2</sup> Keith, *Constit. Hist. of Brit. Emp.*, p. 298.

<sup>3</sup> One colonial jury found that soap and candles were "food-stuffs" in order that they should be imported free of duty. Van Tyne, *England and America. Rivals in American Revolution*, p. 46.

<sup>4</sup> Van Tyne, *Causes of War of Independence*, p. 90.

<sup>5</sup> Beer, *Brit. Colon. Policy, 1754-65*, p. 163.

3 Religious  
unrest in  
New  
England

One further cause of underlying suspicion of England's designs is to be found in the religious restiveness of New England. There, considerable unrest was caused by the fear that bishops were about to be settled in the colonies, and by the activities of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel which was accused of supporting English Episcopalian designs. The colonists were as tenacious of religious as of constitutional liberty, and the fear that England was about to inflict a hated religious system upon them added to the burden of discontent which was steadily growing up

4 The effect  
of the Seven  
Years' War

But though in 1750, or even in 1756, the Revolution may not have been inevitable, yet, by 1763, the Seven Years' War had made it almost so. As Barrington wrote. "The patchwork Government of America will last no longer, the necessity of a Parliamentary establishment of the Government of America upon fixed constitutional principles is brought on with a precipitancy which could not have been foreseen a year ago"<sup>1</sup>

(a) Colonial  
disunion and  
jealousy of  
Britain re-  
vealed

The Seven Years' War had finally revealed colonial disunion and the absence of loyalty to England as serious imperial problems, and had aroused the widest possible dissatisfaction. Intercolonial jealousies, the unwillingness of the colonies to vote supplies and the inadequacy of colonial forces and equipment had been sources of constant anxiety to English commanders. There had been difficulty in suppressing illegal trade with the French,<sup>2</sup> and in 1762 the colonies had to be told of "the necessity of their complying with the King's demands" and that refusal would "exclude them from any titles to His Majesty's particular favour."<sup>3</sup>

Disunion  
largely due  
to geography  
and

The lack of unity among the colonies was in no small degree due to geographical considerations. Mountains in the western background, and rivers running roughly west and east, served to cut off each colony from its neighbour except in so far as the sea and sea-borne trade united them

<sup>1</sup> Barrington, *Bernard Corresp.*, 1760-70, ed. E. Channing and A. C. Coolidge, p. 99. Cited from Adams, *Poht Ideas of Amer. Revol.*, p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> See Beer, *Brit. Colon. Policy*, pp. 88, 90, 103, and 110-2.

<sup>3</sup> *Amer. Hist. Rev.*, vol. v., p. 671.

Past history emphasised these barriers: the puritanical New Englanders had little sympathy with the Catholics and Anglicans of the middle and southern colonies; the hard-working farmer of the temperate northern colonies had few attachments to the wealthy owners of large tropical plantations, worked by slave labour, of the southern colonies

past history

The War had been fought largely in the defence of the colonies, yet a considerable share of the expense had fallen upon England, for the subsidies given by Pitt were equivalent to a refund of "at least two-fifths" of the colonial outlay<sup>1</sup> England emerged from the war with a National Debt of £130,000,000 and the necessity of levying a Land Tax of 4s in the £ Meanwhile the American colonies paid less than nothing directly to the English Treasury, for the duties levied produced only £2,000 a year, whilst their collection cost £7,000<sup>2</sup> Hence the English demand that America should contribute to the cost of her defence had ample justification

(b) The expense of the War borne largely by Britain

Further, through the Treaty of Paris, by the retention of Canada, English obligations became more, and not less, exacting As early as 1762 Newcastle had decided to maintain a garrison of 10,000 troops and to tax the colonies<sup>3</sup> Hence the cost to this country of American administration, which, in 1748, had amounted to £70,000, had risen to £350,000 by 1764<sup>4</sup>

(c) British obligations are increasing

If, however, the war had greatly increased the necessity and desire of England to intervene in American affairs, it had also made the colonists considerably more unwilling to accept English intervention The War had inflicted upon them increased restriction of trade and considerable expense, unequally shared by the individual colonies.<sup>5</sup> At the same time the colonist had come into direct contact with his English rulers and had been more impressed with their faults than with their virtues. Just when the American

(d) The War increased colonial resistance to Great Britain

<sup>1</sup> Keith, *Constit Hist. of First Brit Emp.*, p. 330.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 339

<sup>3</sup> Morison, *Amer. Revol., Sources and Docs.*, p. xii

<sup>4</sup> *Camb Hist. of Brit Emp.*, vol. 1, p. 645.

<sup>5</sup> See *ante*, p. 90.



and freed  
the Ameri-  
cans from  
fear of  
France

colonies had grown most restive of English rule, the success of English arms, by removing the danger from the French, took away one of the chief causes of American dependence on English defence. Pitt referred in 1756 to "the projects of independency which a consciousness of growing strength and the annihilation of the French power might give birth to in our American colonies"<sup>1</sup>

(e) The War  
leads to  
economic  
depression  
in the  
colonies

Finally, the end of the War had been followed by a period of trade depression, and the actual ability of the Colonies to pay taxes to England is open to doubt. They were already obliged to buy English goods, and had begun to contemplate reducing consumption.<sup>2</sup> They were so heavily indebted to English creditors that these opposed the Stamp Act on the ground that any attempt at taxation would lessen the prospects of payment of their debts. Shelburne and colonial merchants held, and perhaps exaggerated, the opinion that, even if the colonists were willing, they would not be in a position to pay increased taxation. The colonies were desperately short of currency, many colonies used only paper money, whilst in Virginia tobacco was the accepted medium of exchange. Any attempt to raise extra taxation would be a further drain on the financial resources of the colonies, and an attempt to exact that taxation in specie, as was made in the Stamp Act, was certain to be fiercely resisted.

England re-  
solves to tax  
the Ameri-  
cans

When the Seven Years' War ended, England had already come to the decision that America should contribute directly to the cost of colonial defence. The idea of taxing the colonies was not new: it had been suggested many times since the opening of the century: it had been urged on Walpole: it was pressed by many parties after the failure of the Albany Congress of 1754, but it had not been seriously entertained by the English Government until 1762.

Grenville  
announces  
the intro-

In 1764, shortly after he had succeeded Bute in office, Grenville announced that the Trade Laws were to be enforced and that, unless the colonies could advance a satisfactory alternative, a Stamp Tax would be imposed by

<sup>1</sup> Pringle MSS, *Amer Hist Rev*, vol v, p 673

<sup>2</sup> *Camb Hist of Brit Emp*, vol. 1, p. 599. This, it may be noticed, was the precursor of non-importation

England in the following year. The authority of the Vice-Admiralty Courts, which had already aroused considerable discontent because of their independence of colonial control, was enlarged, and a new Vice-Admiralty Court for all America was created. The Molasses Act, which was about to expire, was renewed, but the duty was reduced to 3d per gallon. Fresh duties were placed on coffee, white sugar and indigo. The reduction of the Molasses Duty was specially significant in that it marked the beginning of a change in the purpose of colonial customs. Hitherto colonial duties had created little revenue for the English Treasury, but had been levied with the object of directing colonial trade into channels favourable to English merchants and shipping interests. Now, the reduction of the duty showed a readiness to relax trade restraint in order to produce more revenue.

duction of  
the Stamp  
Act

and modifies  
the Molasses  
Act

In 1765 the Stamp Act was passed.<sup>1</sup> A Stamp Tax was to be levied on legal and commercial documents, on newspapers, pamphlets, cards and dice to produce £60,000 or £100,000 for the English Treasury. These proceeds were to be applied to colonial defence. On the one hand, it was easy to urge the justice of the colonies contributing to their own defence, for this would make only a small proportion of its cost. On the other hand, the tax had no reference whatever to restraint of trade, but was an imposition definitely for revenue purposes. Further, this was the first levy of direct taxation made by England in America, and even in England direct taxation was slight,<sup>2</sup> whilst in the colonies "practically no American man had ever paid regular taxes in aid of his provincial government, much less ever paid or been called upon to pay imperial taxes."<sup>3</sup>

The Stamp  
Act passed

Opposition was quickly organised in America, and a Stamp Act Congress, to which nine of the thirteen colonies sent representatives, was convened. There were disturb-

The oppo-  
sition to it  
in the  
colonies

<sup>1</sup> See Grant-Robertson, *Select Statutes*, p. 239.

<sup>2</sup> In the middle of the eighteenth century, the Land Tax—the chief direct tax—contributed only one-sixth of the total revenue, whilst customs produced one-quarter and excise one-half. Clark, *British Opinion and the Amer. Revol.*, p. 123.

<sup>3</sup> Belcher, *First Amer. Civil War*, vol. 1, p. 10.

and in  
England

leads to its  
repeal

ances in Boston, Rhode Island, New York and Connecticut. There were many fierce complaints from colonial merchants, who urged that America could not afford to pay if she was to continue to trade with England. These were emphasised by English merchants, especially by those of London, Liverpool and Glasgow, who found their trade reduced,<sup>1</sup> and their American debtors still more disinclined, and perhaps also a little less able, to pay their debts. Finally, America was not wholly undefended in England, for a few English politicians doubted the right of England to impose taxes in the colonies, and many more were convinced of the inadvisability of the Stamp Act. As a result, in 1766, the Stamp Act was repealed. At the same time, a Declaratory Act was passed stating that England had every right to regulate American affairs and to impose taxation.<sup>2</sup> England had "voted the Right in order not to exercise it," which Chatham denounced as absurd.<sup>3</sup>

The Towns-  
hend duties

The repeal of the Stamp Act caused general satisfaction in the colonies, and John Adams wrote: "The Repeal of the Stamp Act has composed every wave of popular disorder into a smooth and peaceful calm."<sup>4</sup> But England had only postponed her attempt to make America pay for her own defence, and America was satisfied only because of her successful resistance to English policy. In 1767, Townshend, Chancellor of the Exchequer in Chatham's administration, introduced a series of mischievous duties. Weighed down by that frigid, unreasoning legalism which had already so disastrously irritated American feelings, he did not see that legal precedents could force the colonial question to an issue but could provide no constructive solution of that issue. The colonists, in their opposition to the Stamp Act, had drawn a sharp distinction between internal and external

<sup>1</sup> It was said "thousands were unemployed in England, Birmingham manufacturers had dismissed hundreds, and only 20 per cent of the ironworkers of Sheffield were employed." Clark, *British Opinion and the Amer. Revol.*, p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> See Grant-Robertson, *Select Statutes*, p. 244.

<sup>3</sup> *Amer. Hist. Rev.* (1912), p. 572. Debates on Declaratory Act (Hall and Temperley.)

<sup>4</sup> November, 1766. G. O. Trevelyan, *Amer. Revol.*, vol. i., p. 2.

taxes, between a tax and a customs duty Townshend took them at their word and imposed duties on glass, red and white lead, painters' colours, paper and tea, when imported into America. The proceeds of these impositions were to be used primarily for "a more certain and adequate provision for the charge of the administration of justice and the support of Civil Government"<sup>1</sup> and only the remaining surplus would be devoted to the cost of colonial defence. Not only were these duties to be used to produce revenue, as distinct from trade restraint, but they were to render the American administration independent of colonial control.

This simply forced the colonists to oppose all English taxation, and showed that the Declaratory Act was something more than an empty assertion of a disused right. Fierce resistance again began: guided by Samuel Adams, Massachusetts renewed her non-importation agreements, petitioned the King, and circularised the other colonies regarding the injustice of the duties. Non-importation also quickly became the policy of Virginia and North Carolina, and within two years English trade suffered to the extent of £700,000,<sup>2</sup> exports to the colonies falling by almost one half.<sup>3</sup> New York resisted certain provisions of the Mutiny Act, which obliged the colonies to contribute supplies for the colonial army, and the New York Assembly was suspended. The Massachusetts Assembly was ordered to withdraw its circular letter to the other colonies on the injustice of the duties, and, on refusal, was dissolved by the Governor. Yet its letter was endorsed by over half the colonies, especially by those of New England, Virginia and South Carolina. Then a measure was introduced in the English Parliament for the deportation of offenders to England for trial, but, though this might avoid the prejudice of colonial juries, it was a flagrant denial of justice to Americans and was certain to be violently resisted. The power was never exercised. A further and still more energetic attempt was made to enforce the Trade Laws

Increasing  
resistance in  
the colonies

<sup>1</sup> Keith, *Constit Hist of First Brit Emp*, p. 359.

<sup>2</sup> Hunt, *Polit Hist of England*, vol. x, p. 90.

<sup>3</sup> Morison, *Amer. Revol., Sources and Docs*, p. 16.

The Townshend duties withdrawn, except that on tea

In spite of England's serious attempt to coerce the colonies, the opposition won the day, and in 1770 all the Townshend duties, except that on tea, were withdrawn, and the unpopular colonial clauses of the Mutiny Act were allowed to lapse. After the repeal of the Townshend duties there was a general lull in the storm, only in Boston, the centre of resistance, was there open dissatisfaction. Some optimists might think that "a little discreet conduct on both sides would perfectly re-establish that warm affection and respect towards Great Britain for which this country was once so remarkable"<sup>1</sup> More shrewd observers realised that nothing had been settled, and that though the Americans still "professed loyalty, they loved resistance"<sup>2</sup>

Outrages committed by the colonies

1 The *Liberty* is rescued

Throughout 1770 the Massachusetts Assembly continued to sit in spite of its legal suspension in the same year the sloop *Liberty*, belonging to a smuggler, John Hancock, was rescued by the Boston mob from the attack of customs officials. In the same year "on the evening of March 5, there came a short and sharp encounter between a handful of soldiers and a small crowd, voluble in abuse and too free with clubs and snowballs. There was a sputter of musketry and five or six civilians dropped down dead or dying. That was the Boston Massacre,"<sup>3</sup> but it was sufficient to rekindle the dying embers of colonial unrest. In 1772 H.M.S. *Gaspée* was fired by some men of Rhode Island while in pursuit of a suspected smuggling vessel, and in the same year the Whateley letters were published. These were letters written by Hutchinson and Oliver, Governor and Lieutenant-Governor respectively of Massachusetts, to Whateley, an English commoner, urging the strengthening of the colonial executive and some reduction of colonial privileges. From Whateley they were stolen and handed over to Franklin, until now a sober-minded and moderate supporter of colonial claims in defiance of Franklin's demands that these letters should be kept secret, they were

2 The Boston massacre

3 The *Gaspée* incident

4 The Whateley letters published

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Johnson of Connecticut. G. O. Trevelyan, *Amer. Revol.*, vol. 1, p. 97.

<sup>2</sup> *Camb. Mod. Hist.*, vol. vii, p. 155.

<sup>3</sup> G. O. Trevelyan, *Amer. Revol.*, vol. 1, p. 89.

privately circulated in America and later published by the Assembly. Hence the whole affair became enclosed in a mischievous atmosphere of mystery and re-awakened the widespread hostility of the colonies to the independence of their governors, further, the resulting vicious harangue of Solicitor-General Wedderburn against Franklin, when examined before the English Commons, converted Franklin into an open opponent of Britain.

In 1773 Lord North gave the East India Company the right to export tea to America direct, with a complete exemption from tax in England. Hence the Company would have been able to sell tea at such a price as to outbid foreign competitors and even smugglers. This aroused the enmity not merely of patriots, but also of American merchants, who found themselves completely excluded from a lucrative business. The Company would do the whole of its trade through its own warehouses, and give the management of it to notable opponents of previous attempts to boycott British goods. The American populace was now seething with discontent and, under cover of night, a party of Boston citizens seized three of the Company's boats which lay in the harbour and pitched £15,000 worth of tea into the sea, so that by morning "tea lay strewn like seaweed along Dorchester beach."<sup>1</sup> At Philadelphia, New York, and elsewhere, tea-boats had been prevented from entering or driven into flight.

Here was an action which no country could pass over unnoticed, and even Americans decried this violent attack upon private property and this flagrant insult to a country whose trade and credit were so valuable. Neither this nor any other of the events of the last three years was in itself sufficient to cause a revolution, they were isolated incidents, falling short of that united opposition which the Stamp Act and the Townshend Duties had met. On the other hand, they revealed the absence of respect for law or England, and proved that under the agitation of a relatively small number of extremists there was a growing determination to gain independence. Revolution had become almost inevitable: once let it be granted that England was obliged

<sup>5</sup> The Boston Tea Party

The part played by these outrages in the struggle

<sup>1</sup> Van Tyne, *Causes of War of American Independence*, p. 383.

to raise taxation from the colonies, then, because of the complete absence of colonial unity, a system of federation was the only alternative to some form of imposition by the English Government. But even had England been ready for such a system, which she certainly was not, the underlying sense of dissatisfaction which colonial grievances had left and the inability of the separate colonies to co-operate would have rendered it wholly impossible. Moreover, the question of federation and of the Imperial Constitution should have been considered before that of the taxation of the colonies, and apart from it, or it would have been weakened by the deep-rooted unwillingness of the Americans to pay taxes to England and the inflexible legalism of the English.

England resolves to coerce the colonies

The Boston Tea Party was an outrage. England had now to choose between coercion and surrender, and she chose coercion. This task, however, was much more difficult than it would have been even ten years earlier, for patriots, who had twice tasted the joy of forcing England to abandon her policy, would not readily submit to a new attempt at coercion.

The port of Boston is closed

and the Charter of Massachusetts withdrawn

In 1774, the English Government closed the port of Boston until satisfaction should be given to the East India Company at the same time the Government of Massachusetts was removed to Salem. The Charter of the colony was withdrawn and remodelled, the new Constitution giving the Crown considerably more power. These measures not only stiffened the opposition in Massachusetts, but also elicited expressions of sympathy and the provision of support for the rebel colony from Virginia, Maryland and South Carolina. Meanwhile, Samuel Adams was uniting the American opposition. As a result of his labours, a Congress began to meet at Philadelphia in September, 1774, to which all the colonies, except Georgia, sent representatives. This Congress immediately approved the resolutions of Massachusetts that no obedience was due to recent Acts of Parliament, that no taxes should be paid, and that officials should be seized if they attempted to make arrests. Congress demanded a repeal of thirteen Acts, passed since 1763,

The First Congress meets.

advocated armed resistance to England and a complete cessation of English trade. Meanwhile, a new Assembly had begun to meet in Massachusetts, in spite of its prohibition by the English Government. In New Hampshire, the mob seized the arms and ammunition stored in the English fortress; in Connecticut, the militia was organised and drilled by officers appointed by the Assembly, and in Virginia, an order was issued for the raising of the forces.

As in 1766 and 1770, the Government was intimidated by the Opposition. North drafted terms for the consideration of the colonies. he proposed that any colony might be exempt from all taxes, other than those imposed solely for the regulation of trade, in return for contributing a fair share towards the common defence and the expenses of civil administration. This attempt at conciliation was endorsed by both Chatham and Burke, but it was an unworkable compromise, and it appeared merely as the attempt of a terrified Government to calm a victorious Opposition, nay, worse, as an attempt to destroy the colonial unity that was being established. These terms were submitted by the colonies to the second Continental Congress, which met at Philadelphia in spite of English prohibition, and were unhesitatingly rejected. The King's Speech of 1775 clearly declared that the colonists would now be dealt with as rebels.

Lord North  
offers terms

which are  
rejected by  
Congress

The first blow had already been struck at Lexington, where General Gage, Governor of Massachusetts, attempted to seize the arms and ammunition which the colonists had collected only twenty miles from Boston. The Congress then began to raise an army, and appointed Washington as commander-in-chief; an attempt was made to capture Canada; Ticonderoga and Crown Point were taken. Gage, attempting to occupy Bunker's Hill to safeguard his position in Boston, came into conflict with the rebels, and the war began in earnest.

The war  
opens, 1775  
Lexington

Bunker's  
Hill

There were still more attempts to find a peaceable settlement. Chatham suggested the removal of the troops from Boston, the suspension of the Penal Laws, the restriction of the powers of the Admiralty Court, and the delegation

Further at-  
tempts at  
conciliation



of the rights of taxation to the colonial assemblies. These were large sacrifices to make as the price of peace, but hardly provided any solution of the problem of how the colonies should contribute towards imperial defence. Burke would have shelved the question of taxation, withdrawn all the Penal Acts, and applied the proceeds of the commercial duties to the administration of the colonies. Those were merely terms of surrender. After the colonies, in pursuit of a French alliance, had published the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, Lord North proposed the despatch of Commissioners to arrange terms of peace, the withdrawal of all taxes except those imposed for the regulation of trade, and the suspension of all the Penal Acts. In 1778, Lord Howe was sent out, carrying a further draft of terms: all revenue taxes were to be removed, Penal Acts were to be set aside, the colonies were to provide for their own military defence, were to elect their own Governors and officials, subject to the approval of the King, and were to be allowed to have a Federal Assembly. This was by far the most statesmanlike scheme yet produced, but the colonies having already tasted independence and endured three years of warfare were in no mood to accept even these terms. Had these offers been made in 1774 they might have provided a solution of the difficulties they suppose, however, willingness on the part of the colonists to provide for their own defence and to acknowledge loyalty to the Mother Country, and whether these conditions existed even in 1774 may be doubted.

The Declara-  
tion of Inde-  
pendence,  
1776

The Declaration of Independence, after reciting the evils which the colonies had hitherto borne, stated that "these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be Free and Independent States, that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is and ought to be totally dissolved"<sup>1</sup>. This was merely the formal expression of what, in fact, had existed for over a year. Gradually successive grievances had forced the colonies to unite in opposition to England. Samuel Adams organised

<sup>1</sup> Morison, *Amer. Revol., Sources and Docs.*, p. 160

resistance in Massachusetts, where a Committee of Correspondence had been established in every town, with a Central Council at Boston. The methods of Massachusetts had been copied by other colonies until common opposition was so well marshalled that the Continental Congresses could meet.

American opinion had also been becoming steadily more hostile to England and more in favour of independence. Nowhere was this more apparent than in Boston, where "the rich men had a mob always at their command, a mob quite conversant with the use of firearms, easily swayed by peppery speeches and accustomed to riotous demonstrations as the sanctioned means of enforcing its will."<sup>1</sup> From there worked a knot of revolutionary theorists, who, almost from the outset, had gladly embraced the dream of independence. The organisation of American resistance was completed by the publication of *Common Sense* by Tom Paine in 1776: this was the first pamphlet "to present cogent arguments for independence,"<sup>2</sup> and such was its popularity that 120,000 copies were sold in three months.<sup>3</sup>

The develop-  
ment of  
American  
resistance

At the same time the trend of opinion in England tended to make an amicable settlement less and less practicable. Many, like Chatham, denied the right of England to impose taxes on the colonies; he said "It is my opinion that this Kingdom has no right to lay a tax upon the colonies. . . Taxation is no part of the governing or legislative power."<sup>4</sup> He urged that they should be given representation in the English Parliament.<sup>5</sup> Burke, many of the colonial governors, and a large number of merchants, admitted England's right to tax the Americans, but pointed out the foolishness of the step.

Opinion in  
England

Yet even Chatham insisted on the maintenance of the trade regulations and also asserted that "the American

<sup>1</sup> Belcher, *First Amer. Civil War*, vol. 1, p. 114.

<sup>2</sup> Morison, *American Revolution, Sources*, p. 37.

<sup>3</sup> Belcher, *First Amer. Civil War*, vol. 1, p. 235.

<sup>4</sup> Hansard, vol. xvi, p. 99. Cited from Clark, *British Opinion and the Amer. Revol.*, p. 196.

<sup>5</sup> It is to be noted that he drew out two schemes for such representation. See *E.H.R.*, October, 1907, p. 756. B. Williams, *Chatham and the Representation of Colonies in Imperial Parliament*.

becomes  
more hostile  
to the  
colonies

colonies have been, are, and of right ought to be dependent on the Imperial Crown of Great Britain and subordinate to the British Parliament"<sup>1</sup> He was not prepared to surrender to rebellion, but urged its repression. In this he was supported by the majority of Englishmen, so that, as the colonial attitude became more aggressive, that of the English stiffened. In 1765 there were thirty-five petitions in favour of conciliation, but ten years later there were only fifteen.<sup>2</sup> Consequently the policy of the reactionaries steadily gained adherents: their opinion was clearly given by Lord Mansfield, who said that "the British Legislature . . . has authority to bind every part and every subject without the least distinction, whether such subjects have the right to vote, or whether the law binds places within the realm or without."<sup>3</sup>

The cam-  
paigns, 1775-  
78

For the first three years of the war fighting was spasmodic and indecisive: it took place chiefly in the northern colonies, round the three towns of Boston, New York and Philadelphia. It opened in 1775 with the attempt of General Gage to seize the ammunition the colonists had collected at Lexington, twenty miles from Boston. This was followed by the rising of almost all New England, and the attack of the colonists on Canada: they succeeded in capturing Ticonderoga, Crown Point and Montreal, but completely failed in their main objective—the reduction of Quebec. Meanwhile, North's peace proposals were drafted, submitted to Congress and rejected.

In the next year the British commander, Howe, evacuated Boston and moved south to New York with the intention of moving further south to Philadelphia. This was the year of the rejection of Burke's attempt at conciliation and the publication of the Declaration of Independence, which paved the way for French intervention. In the year 1777 Burgoyne attempted to invade the colonies from Canada, whilst Howe, with scant regard for co-operation, was concentrating

<sup>1</sup> Adams, *Polit. Ideas of Amer. Revol.*, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Clark, *Polit. Opinion and Amer. Revol.*, p. 85.

<sup>3</sup> Hansard, *Parli. Hist.*, vol. xvi., p. 174, February 24, 1766. Cited from Adams, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

on Philadelphia. The British Secretary for War, Lord Germaine, having promised Burgoyne every assistance, neglected to instruct Howe to be ready to join him, with the result that Burgoyne was cut off by his opponents in difficult, thickly-wooded country and forced to surrender at Saratoga. The success of Howe in taking Philadelphia was a meagre offset to this defeat

Saratoga

Saratoga was the turning-point in the war. It had the effect of inducing France to recognise the United States and to enter the war on its side. Fighting in the northern colonies now practically ceased, and though the English continued to occupy New York and to use it as a base, the chief fighting was transferred to the two Carolinas. Clinton, the new commander, forthwith evacuated Howe's conquest, Philadelphia, and withdrew to New York.

France enters the War, 1778

European politics at this time were dominated by the existence of the Bourbon coalition of France and Spain, for the Family Compact of 1733 had been followed by those of 1743 and 1761. In 1759 the dependence of Spain upon France had been made certain by the accession to the Spanish throne of Charles III, the Don Carlos of Naples of earlier history. It was further strengthened by the close friendship of Choiseul and Grimaldi, the respective chief ministers of France and Spain. England felt endangered by this coalition, and in 1770 she had been on the verge of war with Spain when the Spanish claimed the Falkland Islands: only the fact that France then declined to assist Spain prevented an outbreak of hostilities. Against the Family Compact, England was constantly endeavouring to form an alliance with Russia. When, in 1772, Russia secured a large slice of Polish territory by joining with Prussia and Austria in the First Partition, England put no obstacle in her way. In 1778 the British Government proposed an offensive and defensive alliance, but then the opposition of Count Panin, the Russian Chancellor, caused the Czarina Catherine to decline the proposal. Russia was relying on her alliance with Prussia, concluded in 1764, and as Prussia, since her abandonment by England at the Peace of Paris in 1763, had no liking for English friendship, there were constant

The Family Compacts

England left without an ally in Europe

difficulties in the way of a firm alliance of England with Russia.

Spain also  
enters the  
War

When France entered the War of American Independence on the side of the colonists she was naturally followed in 1779 by Spain. England could do little against this joint intervention, for in 1780 Russia was ranged on the side of her enemies in the League of Armed Neutrality, formed to resist the English claim to search neutral vessels on the High Seas. Before the Bourbon Coalition Great Britain stood isolated and alone, Austria had been her enemy in the Seven Years' War, Prussia, her ally, had been alienated by her abandonment; Russia had stood aloof and now was hostile.

England  
loses com-  
mand of the  
sea

Faced by a great naval opposition, Great Britain lost control even of the Narrow Seas. The French and Spanish fleets cruised the Channel unmolested, and French forces were gathered at Havre and St. Malo for an invasion. Gibraltar and Minorca were subjected to long sieges, and though Gibraltar held out, Minorca was taken in 1782.

The cam-  
paign in  
America

In America interest centred round the fierce conflict between Cornwallis and Greene in the Carolinas. In 1781, after Cornwallis gained a victory at Guildford, losing one-third of his army, the war in the Carolinas virtually came to an end and the struggle was continued in Virginia. Here French intervention proved decisive. Not only did the French fleet blockade the coast and so make reinforcement of Cornwallis by land impossible, but, having severely mauled the English fleet and forced it to retire to New York to refit, it shut up Cornwallis in Yorktown. Here the English commander was forced to surrender and the war practically came to an end. The English position was somewhat improved by the victory of Rodney at the Battle of the Saints in the West Indies, and by the successful defence of Gibraltar by General Elliot. In November, 1782, a provisional treaty of peace was made, to be converted, in the next year, into the Treaty of Versailles.

The Treaty  
of Versailles

By this Treaty England recognised the sovereignty and independence of the United States, with the Mississippi on the west and the Lakes on the north as its boundaries.

A promise was given by the United States that the Loyalists, the adherents of Great Britain in the colonies, should suffer no further confiscation and this was reinforced by a recommendation of Congress to the separate States that the laws against them should be removed and their property restored. Unfortunately the States disregarded this recommendation and Great Britain was unable to intervene further in the interests of the Loyalists, many of whom suffered severe persecution and cruelty thousands soon emigrated into Canada.<sup>1</sup>

The independence of America recognised

Great Britain had also to balance her account with her European enemies. She regained Grenada, St. Vincent, Dominica, St. Christopher, and Montserrat, but she had to restore St. Lucia and cede Tobago to France, and Florida and Minorca to Spain. Shelburne and Grafton would even have surrendered Gibraltar had a sufficiently high price been offered them, but the Duke of Richmond and Admiral Keppel successfully organised the opposition to this proposal.

Britain's losses

There were many reasons for England's failure to crush the American rebellion. In the first place all the difficulties of the Seven Years' War were present with increased force the British army was fighting in a country three thousand miles from home, which could be reached only after a voyage of at least six weeks and on territory which was full of pitfalls for those who had made no serious effort to master the topography of the district. In the absence of any large Loyalist colonial forces, victory could have been gained only by the employment of an enormous English force overseas. It was not that Washington's army was either very large or well provided for, for his difficulties were little less than those of his English opponents. But the American army was fighting on its own ground, and the loss of a few battles could not end the resistance of the colonies. Washington was hampered by undisciplined forces, by the short service for which they were enlisted, by lack of ade-

The causes of Great Britain's failure

1. Distance of America from England and British ignorance of America

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter X, p. 282. "The total outlay on the part of Great Britain, both during and after the war, on account of the Loyalists, must have amounted to not less than £6,000,000, exclusive of the value of the lands assigned" (Knowles, *Econ. Devel. of Overseas Emp.*, vol. II, p. 147).

quate equipment, and by colonial jealousy, he himself could claim no great ability either as a general or as a military administrator. Against him were at least equal forces, for in 1776 Lord Howe had under his command larger forces than those under Wellington at Waterloo.<sup>1</sup> But the English troops were scattered in numerous garrisons. Even if Washington was no military genius, he brought to the struggle that indomitable courage which sprang from a patriotic devotion to what he regarded as duty and right, unflagging perseverance and inexhaustible patience.

2. The inevitable division of British troops

3. Ability of Washington

4. Absence of great generals on British side

5. European intervention in the War

5. Incompetence of British Government

Effects of Revolution

On the English side there was no first-class general, except, perhaps, Cornwallis. Howe was capable, but indolent. Petty quarrels reduced mediocre direction to complete impotence, for the aggressive Cornwallis was frequently opposed to the leisurely Clinton; Admiral Keppel was often in ill-concealed conflict with his subordinate, Sir Hugh Palliser, and Lord Howe, in 1778, refused to serve under the existing Ministry.

In such circumstances European intervention was decisive. France brought eighty and Spain sixty ships of the line into the War, and to these England could oppose only forty-five, for the rest of her fleet of 119 first, second and third rates were not manned or ready for service.<sup>2</sup> Great Britain lost her supremacy at sea and was quite unable to deal effectively with a colonial conflict so far from Whitehall.

The chief cause of Great Britain's weakness was the complete incompetence of the Government. Party and family influence, corruption and widely abused patronage were having their reward. In addition to incompetence, the Government took pleasure in its petty interference in American affairs, and English commanders frequently found themselves checked and hampered by ill-informed, incapable and desultory ministers. The blunders of Lord Germaine which led up to the surrender at Saratoga were typical of the meddling incapacity of the home government.

The American Revolution had effects far beyond the

<sup>1</sup> Van Tyne, *England and America, Rivals in Amer. Revol.*, p. 125

<sup>2</sup> *Can. Const. Doc.*, 1791-1818, pp. 196-204. Cited from Coupland, *Amer. Revol. and Brit. Emp.*, p. 291

Continent and far beyond its immediate conclusion. It has been described as "an important part of the great liberal movement of the eighteenth century, a portent of dominion Home Rule, and a laboratory of imperial and federal problems."<sup>1</sup> In England it stimulated the agitation for Parliamentary Reform, and English and American Radicals were in regular correspondence. There grew up the County Associations for Reform, organised by Wyvill, the Constitutional Society, the Society for Constitutional Information, the Robin Hood Society, and the Supporters of the Bill of Rights, all engineered by John Horne Tooke and Major Cartwright. These could effect little, especially when the French Revolution turned English people violently against Liberalism, but the success of the United States served as a definite and lasting inspiration.

<sup>1</sup> in stimulating radical movements

In Ireland, too, the Radical agitation against English domination gathered fresh energy from the American example. It is significant that Irish people between 1772 and 1774 fled to America at the rate of 10,000 a year,<sup>2</sup> and it is not surprising that Ireland should realise that her problem was exactly that which the Americans had forced to a successful issue—the problem of the subjection of a people to the English Parliament and Privy Council, and the economic subordination of their country to England.

<sup>2</sup> Influence upon Ireland,

Nor was the French Revolution unconnected with its American predecessor. French contingents fought on the colonial side by land and sea, and French soldiers and sailors returned to cherish liberty as dearly at home as in America. Lafayette, who fought at Yorktown, became an organiser of French republican forces in the Revolution, Tom Paine, who had contributed to the cause of liberty and independence with *Common Sense* in 1776, became a deputy in the French States-General, and wrote the *Rights of Man* in 1791.

<sup>3</sup> on French Revolution,

Equally important was the fact that the American Revolution was the forerunner of the overthrow of Mercantilism in England. At the basis of the American conflict lay the

<sup>4</sup> and on Mercantilism

<sup>1</sup> Morison, *Amer Revol*, *Sources*, p. xi

<sup>2</sup> Coupland, *Amer Revol and Brit. Emp*, p. 101.



determination of the English to manage their colonies to their own economic advantage. After the loss of the American colonies, English merchants discovered that trade with America began to increase by leaps and bounds. This seemed to prove that trade was not dependent on political domination, and the tendency towards Free Trade was begun. In 1783 Pitt proposed to free the trade between the West Indies and America, but in the face of English opposition he had to abandon his scheme. It is also noteworthy that Adam Smith added the chapter "Of Colonies" to his Glasgow lectures in 1763-76, the basis of "The Wealth of Nations" in 1776, and that he appended an entirely new chapter on "The Conclusion of the Mercantile System" to the third edition of 1784.<sup>1</sup> It is true that, despite Adam Smith's influence upon the younger Pitt, Mercantilism died slowly, for English people still believed indirect taxes were indispensable. England did not commit herself to Free Trade until the middle of the nineteenth century, yet Canning and Huskisson, the great Free Traders, looked back to the American Revolution as the origin of their Cause.

5 The Revolution defeats George III's attempt to re-establish the power of the King

The character of the King

His faults.

One effect of the American Revolution was far more immediate: the complete failure of the Ministry to cope with the colonial problem overthrew the system of government which George III had laboured to maintain. He had come to the throne as a youth of twenty-three years of age: he was not unpopular, for he was respectable and pious, and a devoted son of the Church of England. He was genial and benevolent, often "chatting with the poor like a good-natured Squire."<sup>2</sup> But under his affable disposition there were many faults; his father had died when George was twelve, and he had been educated by his cunning mother, whose married life was dominated by the friction between the King and her husband and herself. George's chief counsellor was Bute, and he had been constantly surrounded by an atmosphere of petty intrigue and feminine craft: hence he was conceited, obstinate and narrow-minded. In his first speech from the throne, though he was at some

<sup>1</sup> Coupland, *Amer. Revol. and Brit. Emp.*, p. 162

<sup>2</sup> Hunt, *Polit. Hist.*, vol. x., p. 3.

pains to declare that "he was educated in this country" and that he gloried "in the name of Britain," he could not hide the fact that his mother was a scheming German and his chief counsellor a hated Scot. Further, he had studied with considerable care Bolingbroke's *Patriot King*, published in 1749. His chief object was to overthrow the power of the Whig aristocracy by reasserting the authority of the Crown.

Thus George III came to the throne with the fixed intention that he would rule and not merely reign. The power of the Sovereign which had been curtailed at the Revolution had lain inactive through the reigns of George I and George II, but now it was revived. In the words of Burke: "The power of the Crown, almost dead and rotten as Prerogative, grew up anew with more strength and far less odium, under the name of Influence."<sup>1</sup> It was not necessary for the King to violate any laws to establish his power; he had merely to act according to the methods of Whig ministers. But he resolved to be his own Prime Minister: he did not dispense with the office of Chief Minister, but that official was either the King's own complacent subordinate or a mere powerless figure-head. Scarcely had George come to the throne when the resignation of Pitt and the virtual dismissal of Newcastle made the way clear for the elevation of the King's favourite, Bute. Having carried through the Peace of Paris and undermined the strength of the Whig opposition, Bute resigned in 1763. Grenville became Prime Minister. Without the King's confidence, and with the irritating habit of lecturing and bullying his master, he remained only until 1765. Rockingham then took office for one year, as the only possible alternative to his hated predecessor. Next the King tried Chatham, whose hatred of party faction made George hopeful of faithful service: but Chatham's illness made his power slight, and soon Grafton, a friend of the King, and an inveterate lover of the racecourse and the theatre, became the leading influence of the Government. From 1770 until 1782 the King's satellite, North, was Chief Minister.

He attempts  
to rule as  
well as reign

He is his  
own Prime  
Minister

<sup>1</sup> *Thoughts on Present Discontents*, p. 12.

and controls  
the Cabinet

Through all these years the policy of successive governments was dictated or controlled by the King. George sat in the Privy Council, to his ministers he gave completely detailed instructions, and from them he regularly received full information of the working of their Departments.<sup>1</sup> Cabinets were not united by any common adherence to a policy of their own; instead their only unity arose from their dependence on the King, for George, following the advice of the *Patriot King*, consistently declined to be served by Cabinets of one party. Tories as well as members of all the various Whig groups found themselves hustled together into a Cabinet, to serve not their party but their King, and as if finally to prevent any unity or opposition, the King took care to have at least one spy in office so that the least breath of disloyalty to the Crown was reported to the throne. Thus the Earl of Egmont carried out this service while First Lord of the Admiralty from 1763 to 1766, and his work was continued by the Earl of Hertford as Lord Chamberlain of the Household and by the Earl of Northington, who was successively Lord Chancellor and Lord President of the Council, and who was responsible for the overthrow of the Rockingham administration in 1766.

He secures  
the support  
of the  
Commons by  
"influence"

The foundation of the King's power was the royal influence in Parliament. To members, the Crown could offer offices, many of them lucrative sinecures, as the reward of support, or probable defeat at the polls as the reward of opposition. To voters, the Crown could give cash in the last resort, offices or contracts long before the introduction of competitive examinations as the entrance to the naval and military professions and civil services, every commission and post could be used as the reward of political service. In the two previous reigns, the control of this royal patronage had been handed over to the Ministry, but Newcastle soon lost control of the King's patronage, and George himself undertook its management. In the Houses, members soon found that their occupation of any post was conditional no longer upon their supporting the Prime Minister, but upon their steady submission to the

<sup>1</sup> See Fortescue, *Correspondence of George III*

wishes of the King Of the House of Commons over twenty-five per cent. held places, of the 167 Members who followed the royal policy and voted against the Repeal of the Stamp Act, sixty-one held places, and in 1770, of a Commons of 558 Members, 192 were place holders<sup>1</sup> For opposition to the Crown in the case of Wilkes, General Conway and Colonel Barré were deprived of their posts, and for hostility to the Crown on the subject of the Peace of Paris, Newcastle, Grafton, and Rockingham were dismissed from their Lord-Lieutenancies By the use of Royal Patronage a strong party of "King's friends" was gradually built up which was ever ready to carry out the King's wishes

In the constituency the task of influencing electors was efficiently carried out by Lord North, John Robinson,<sup>2</sup> the Secretary to the Treasury Board, and Charles Jenkinson, the leader of the "King's friends" after the retirement of Bute The expenditure of money was curtailed as far as possible, yet the elections frequently cost the Government £50,000<sup>3</sup> contracts for clothing, equipment or provisions for the forces were used as bribes to the electors, and a century before the introduction of vote by ballot, it was easy for the King by these means to secure the support of the voters Similarly the King took care to give his policy the appearance of popular support by organising in the country loyal addresses for example, in 1775, an attempt was made to induce the two Universities to send up addresses in favour of the American War.<sup>4</sup>

and wins  
the votes  
of the  
electorate

This reassertion of Royal power did not pass without considerable opposition In 1780 Dunning succeeded in getting his motion passed that "the influence of the Crown has increased, is increasing and ought to be diminished" In 1769 the *Letters of Junius* began to appear these attacked the King's system of government, and in 1770 there was published Burke's *Thoughts on Present Discontents*, which was a vigorous and critical denunciation of the corruption

The oppo-  
sition to  
Royal power

<sup>1</sup> Clark, *British Opinion and the Amer Revol*, p 235

<sup>2</sup> See *Parli Papers of John Robinson, 1774-84* Ed W T Laprade

<sup>3</sup> *Correspondence of George III*, vol v, p 478

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, p 39

of the Court Sir Philip Clerke introduced motions in 1778 and 1781 to exclude contractors from the Commons; the opposition voiced by Wyvill at York to the use of royal patronage and influence was supported by the vote of twenty-eight other counties and at least eleven cities.<sup>1</sup> In 1779 a Bill was introduced to prevent Members of Parliament securing Government contracts which had not first been placed open to competition. Burke was foremost in leading Parliamentary attempts to exclude large numbers of place-holders from the Commons. There was further a widespread agitation for the reform of the Parliamentary and electoral system. In an attempt to check the influence of the towns where corruption was strongest, Chatham urged the increase of county representation. Grenville Sharp published a series of pamphlets urging a more equal system of representation and more frequent Parliaments. Fox advocated annual Parliaments and the addition of one hundred Members to the counties, and the Duke of Richmond urged that Parliaments should be elected annually and that the vote should be given to all men.

The demand  
for Parlia-  
mentary re-  
form

The case of  
Wilkes

In this atmosphere it is easy to understand the passionate attachment of the populace to Wilkes and the enthusiastic interest taken in his case. Wilkes had been elected for Aylesbury, and being "a distinguished member of that brotherhood which had its headquarters at Medenham Abbey and indulged in orgies both obscene and profane, he moved in the society which cultivated vice as an art."<sup>2</sup> In 1763 No. 45 of the *North Briton* appeared, in which he attacked the Government's conclusion of the Treaty of Paris. This attack upon the Ministry aroused George III's violent anger, and a general warrant was issued for the arrest of those concerned in the publication. Among the forty-nine arrested within three days was Wilkes. At his trial he pleaded a Member of Parliament's privilege of freedom from arrest and was released. Thereupon he sued Wood, the Under-Secretary of State, and his colleague, Lord Halifax: general warrants were declared illegal and Wilkes was

No. 45 of  
the *North  
Briton*

<sup>1</sup> Clark, *British Opinion and the Amer. Revol.*, p. 214.

<sup>2</sup> Winstanley, *Personal and Party Government*, p. 159.

awarded £1,000 damages against Wood, and six years later his suit against Halifax ended in his winning a further £4,000 damages. The Commons, however, voted No 45 a seditious libel, ordered it to be publicly burned, and declared that the privilege of freedom from arrest did not extend to seditious libels: this last was an innovation, for privilege had previously covered all crimes except treason, felony, and breach of the peace: yet it was within the right of the Commons to determine their own privileges. Wilkes now felt himself in some personal danger, and fled abroad to seek recreation in "amorous delights."<sup>1</sup> The Commons ejected him, and he was then outlawed for the republication of No 45 in his absence.

So matters stood when, at the election of 1768, Wilkes was returned for Middlesex. He returned to England, surrendered to his outlawry, and was imprisoned. The outlawry was withdrawn, and he was fined £1,000 and sentenced to twenty-two months' imprisonment. The publication of a further libel in the form of comments on a letter of the Secretary of State to the Lambeth Magistracy, recommending the use of the soldiery in case of disorder, resulted in his being a second time expelled from the House on February 4, 1769. At the consequent election, only twelve days later, he was re-elected. being again expelled by the House, within a month he had been a third time elected for the county and a third time expelled. Finally, on April 13, he was a fourth time elected and a fourth time ejected but this time the Commons took the illegal step of declaring Wilkes incapable of being elected. The House then announced his unsuccessful rival as duly returned and the latter thereupon took his seat.<sup>2</sup>

Neither Wilkes's previous character nor his violent and disgraceful diatribes during these incidents arouse sympathy. His chief support came from the City and neighbourhood of London, though he received considerable favour from the rest of the country. But behind the

<sup>1</sup> Ency Brit—art on Wilkes

<sup>2</sup> For documents on Wilkes's case, see Grant-Robertson, *Select Statutes*, p. 440

The Middlesex election

The case of Wilkes reveals political injustices

attacks on Wilkes, the people clearly recognised the sinister influence of the King and the Court, his case brought into prominence the fact that opposition to the Crown would be met by the malicious animosity of the Government. Further, these events showed how little the Commons were dependent on the people they nominally represented, and therefore drew attention to the urgent need for Parliamentary Reform.

The close of  
his career.

Wilkes re-entered the House in 1774, vigorously defending the colonial resistance, and in 1782 succeeded in having the Resolutions, passed against him, erased from the Journals of the House. He took an active part in the politics of the City of London and became Lord Mayor in 1774. Here, however, he met his final defeat, for, having led the movement for the suppression of the Gordon riots in 1780, he fell foul of the city merchants. In 1790 he retired into private life, and died seven years later.

Disorders in  
the Royal  
household

Politics were not the only, though they were certainly the chief, cause of unrest at this time. Despite the respectability of George III there were disorders in the Royal household which finally necessitated the passing of the Royal Marriage Act of 1772,<sup>1</sup> forbidding descendants of George II to marry without the King's consent. Moreover, despite the fact that George had surrendered all the Royal hereditary revenues in return for an ample grant of £800,000 a year from Parliament, he ran heavily into debt and had to seek the assistance of Parliament.

Opposition  
to the ex-  
tension of  
religious  
toleration

The further increase of religious toleration had aroused considerable opposition. In 1778, Catholics who abjured the temporal power of the Pope were allowed to inherit lands, in the next year dissenting ministers were relieved of the necessity of subscribing to the Articles, and Irish Dissenters were exempt from the provisions of the Test Act. The extension of toleration to Catholics was greeted with keen opposition from the London populace, and riots broke out, led by Lord George Gordon, in which Catholic property was sacked, magistrates were attacked and prisons opened. These riots were suppressed with the help of the military.

The Gordon  
Riots

<sup>1</sup> See Grant-Robertson, *Select Statutes*, p. 245

forces, and 285 rioters were killed and 173 were wounded, whilst a further 139 were put on trial, of whom 59 were capitally convicted and 21 executed <sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, however great the opposition and however widespread the unrest in the country, the King's system of government remained unmoved, until the necessity of making peace with America overthrew it. In the contest with the colonies Great Britain suffered "the most damaging and humiliating defeat in all our records" <sup>2</sup> Not only was she finally forced to submit to American demands, but her weakness had been openly proved. Lord Shelburne said in 1780: "We had become the contempt and standing jest of all Europe." <sup>3</sup> Great Britain had even lost her command of the seas, so that hostile fleets could "ride insultingly and unmolested even off our ports and within our Channel" <sup>4</sup> The coast had been raided by Paul Jones, the privateer, 600 ships were lost annually, and by the end of the war 3,000 British seamen were in enemy hands. The National Debt reached almost £250,000,000, unemployment and distress were everywhere rampant.

George had made himself responsible for the government of the country, and justice demanded that he should take the blame for the English defeat. Just as he had resisted all opposition and attempted to stamp out criticism within the country, so he had resolutely set his face against every effort to conciliate the colonists by concessions. He had said "We must either master them or totally leave them to themselves and treat them as aliens" <sup>5</sup> Hence the Opposition in Parliament and the rebels in America had this in common that both were opposed to George and his Government. James Luttrell said "To be separated from America endangers our liberty and the happiness of every individual in this kingdom, much less than giving to the Crown the

The  
American  
war damages  
British pres-  
tige,

discredits  
the Govern-  
ment

<sup>1</sup> Hunt, *Polit Hist*, vol x, p 207.

<sup>2</sup> Coupland, *Amer Revol and Brit Emp*, p 2

<sup>3</sup> *Parlt Hist*, vol xxi, p 640. Cited from Coupland, *op cit*, p 23

<sup>4</sup> Rockingham to Admiral Keppel, 1779. *Memoirs of Rockingham*, vol. II, pp. 385-386. Cited from Coupland, *op cit*, p 26

<sup>5</sup> *Correspondence of George III with Lord North*, vol 1, p 216. Cited from Clark, *British Opinion and the Amer Revol*, p 242



and over-  
throws  
George's at-  
tempt to  
rule

rights and privileges of subjects who must become more numerous than ourselves''<sup>1</sup> The success of the colonists was the defeat of the Crown George's attempt to govern by Royal influence did not die in a day, but the success of his scheme was made impossible In 1782 he was forced to accept the Whig administration of Rockingham which he hated, and then, in the next year, to submit to the detested Fox-North coalition So great was George's reluctance to admit the Rockingham Ministry that he even talked of retiring to Hanover, the return of the Whigs to power was a personal defeat for the King as well as a defeat for his system of government In 1782 he was obliged at last to accept Burke's Place Act, which deprived the revenue officers of the right to sit in Parliament, a Bill which the King had previously successfully resisted<sup>2</sup> Certainly the King was glad to have Pitt as Prime Minister in 1783, though without a majority in the House but Pitt was no mere satellite of the throne, and he soon acquired the confidence of Parliament. With the entrance of Pitt into power the first phase of George's reign ends: he had attempted to revive the power of the Crown, but the failure to cope with the colonial question had defeated his attempt. Now it was left to Pitt to pacify the country, which had become profoundly agitated by twenty years of unsuccessful resistance to unpopular government, and to build up the economic strength of the nation. The American Revolution made a period of retrenchment, reform and reorganisation inevitable.

<sup>1</sup> *Parlt Hist.*, vol xix, p 42 Cited from Clark, *op cit*, p 247

<sup>2</sup> This Bill is printed in Grant-Robertson, *Select Statutes*, p 247.

## CHAPTER V

### THE DOMESTIC POLICY OF WILLIAM PITT

HOWEVER great the damage inflicted upon Great Britain by the American Revolution, it at least brought to an end the period of meddlesome inefficiency and raised Pitt to the office of Prime Minister. When called by the King to this position, he was only twenty-four years of age. Born in 1759, the year of his father's victories, he had been educated by a private tutor and at Pembroke Hall, Cambridge. He studied Law in the Inns of Court, was called to the Bar in 1780, and began to practise on the Western Circuit. In the same year, by the influence of Sir James Lowther, the Whig magnate of the north country, he obtained a seat in the Commons for Appleby. He attached himself to the group of Whigs led by Shelburne, to which his father had in his lifetime belonged, refused subordinate offices under North and Rockingham, was Chancellor of the Exchequer under Shelburne, and after his resignation went into opposition to the North-Fox Coalition. Thanks to the King's inveterate abhorrence of Fox, and his successful use of his influence against Fox's India Bill, the Coalition was overthrown in 1783, and Pitt was called to form a Ministry. He was tall and majestic, but stiff and unbending in gait and in manner, something of a martinet, he had a countenance which had been reddened by the constant use of port wine, and the eyes which heredity and wine had combined to make brilliant. His manner was austere and frigid, even the King felt bound to treat him as a master, rather than as a servant, he never married and had only one love affair, but that a serious one with Eleanor Eden, the daughter of Lord Auckland, the English Ambassador at The Hague. He had few intimate friends, though to such as he had he clung with tenacity and devotion. Though he was rarely angry, and in private was always patient and

Pitt takes  
office

His early  
career

and charac-  
ter

good-humoured, yet, having once learned to hate, he did so without vacillation or repentance. He took public life seriously. In private life he loved to gambol with children. His private character was pure and stainless, as a statesman he was incorruptible, scrupulously honest and public-spirited. He was an orator of consummate ability, speaking usually without any assistance from notes, he had the capacity to convince by sound reasoning, to inspire confidence by the absolute reliability of his information, and to command attention by his perfect lucidity. His was a nature too reserved and distant to make him ever popular. He was respected by all, but loved or hated by few. His character was as enigmatic as many of the phases of his life. In manner he had all the frigidity of the Bar, the aloofness of the judge, yet in outlook he was entirely unfettered by judicial or political precedent.

Pitt is the royal nominee, dependent on royal support

Pitt came into office as the King's nominee, as his saviour from Fox and the extreme Whigs. Fox's Coalition with North was overthrown by Temple's statement in the House on George's behalf that those who voted for Fox's India Bill would be the King's enemies. Pitt always had the confidence of the King, and was always indebted to him. In 1798 George, gently reprimanding his great Minister for engaging in a duel with the leader of the Opposition, Tierney, told him that "public characters have no right to weigh alone what they owe to themselves, they must consider what they owe to the country."<sup>1</sup> Pitt was in a minority in the Commons; even with the support of the Crown party he had against him a majority of not less than forty or fifty.<sup>2</sup> He himself had no personal following. He omitted Shelburne, his former leader, from his Cabinet, because he could not trust him, his colleagues were "a procession of ornamental phantoms," and they all were "considered as a set of children playing at ministers, and must be sent back to school."<sup>3</sup> The Opposition refused supplies which had not already been voted, postponed the Mutiny Bill, and carried a vote of "No confidence."

<sup>1</sup> Rose, *William Pitt*, part ii, p. 336

<sup>2</sup> Rosebery, *Pitt*, p. 52      <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 46.

Thanks to the use of the widespread patronage of the King, the election of 1784 made Pitt's Ministry secure 160 of the Opposition suffered the loss of their seats, and have come down to history as Fox's Martyrs. This election, according to the King's servants' reckoning, cost the Crown £193,500 in cash, in addition to gifts of offices and peerages, and Pitt's position was thus rendered even more dependent on royal power. Even so the absence of an organised party wrecked Pitt's Irish scheme, and three years later he had fifty-two regular followers, but Fox, the leader of the Opposition, had 138, so that Pitt was dependent on the support of the 185 members who formed the Crown party, or the votes of some of the 183 not accounted for in those three groups<sup>1</sup>

Whilst, however, Pitt virtually owed his whole position to the influence of the King, he was soon able to count on the support of the nation. This was revealed by the steady diminution of the majority against Pitt in the House before the election of 1784, and by the result of that election, which was not entirely due to Royal management. In Yorkshire, for example, popular opinion returned Wilberforce in opposition to the Whig aristocracy. Pitt won the national confidence: the country had been moved by the disasters of the American War to deep animosity to George III's method of government, and North had played the part of Judas by his Coalition with Fox. Pitt had won respect and he now inspired confidence. By 1790 he had a clear majority in the Commons, and four years later his power was strengthened by the adherence of the Portland Whigs.

But Pitt also has the confidence of the country

Pitt, therefore, secure in the confidence of the electors, was in a position to become a real Prime Minister. The influence of the King did not die in a day: even in Pitt's Ministry the King was able to keep his favourite, Thurlow, as Lord Chancellor for nine years, in spite of his frequent opposition to the Prime Minister. but in 1792 Pitt offered the King his resignation as the alternative to Thurlow's dismissal. The King chose to dismiss Thurlow. Still later,

He has the powers of the Prime Minister

<sup>1</sup> Rose, *William Pitt*, part II, p. 295.

in 1832, the Duke of Wellington declared that he could not "refuse office, when he was pressed by the King to undertake it, even though the policy to be pursued was repugnant to his own convictions"<sup>1</sup> During Addington's Ministry the King's power again became extremely strong, as he "still regarded himself as responsible for the national policy"<sup>2</sup> But Pitt was never the King's subservient servant, for he declared in 1783 he would not be "responsible for measures not his own, or at least in which his heart and judgment did not cordially acquiesce"<sup>3</sup> The policy which he adopted was his own, and indeed, towards the end of his Ministry, George grew somewhat jealous of his powerful servant, and was glad to see the more pliable and docile Addington take office

and enforces  
principles of  
Cabinet  
government

Pitt not only exercised the authority of Prime Minister as Walpole had done, but he also used the name which Walpole had refused. He insisted that his colleagues were bound together by common policy and by common duty to him. he believed that the Cabinet was a unit which stood or fell as a whole. To these principles he was not always able to be absolutely faithful, for his Ministry was composed of somewhat divergent elements, especially after the admission of the Portland Whigs, and his second Ministry was avowedly "broad-bottomed". Within his Cabinet there were often wide differences of opinion which even Pitt could not compose, and in these circumstances it was by no means possible to maintain a united front in the House or in the country. The principles of government which were held by Pitt were not necessarily accepted by his followers, but were largely forced upon them by him. In 1794, when Lord Fitzwilliam went as Viceroy to Ireland, he was pledged to support the Government, "considering Mr Pitt as the Prime Minister without whom no material measure as to Things or Persons is to be concerted or done" (*Carlisle Papers*). In 1803 Pitt asserted the "absolute necessity that there should be an avowed and real minister,

<sup>1</sup> Davis, *Age of Grey and Peel*, p. 148

<sup>2</sup> Brodrick and Fotheringham, *Polit Hist*, vol. xi, p. 2

<sup>3</sup> Rose, *William Pitt*, part 1., p. 160

possessing the Chief Weight in the Council, and the principal place in the confidence of the King, in that respect there can be no rivalry or division of power. It must rest in the person generally called first minister, who ought to be at the head of the finances."<sup>1</sup> In 1792, even against the King, Pitt insisted on the dismissal of Lord Chancellor Thurlow because of his insubordination. Immediately after Pitt's resignation, in 1801, his principle of the corporate responsibility of the Cabinet received further confirmation; his Chancellor, Lord Loughborough, tried to remain in Addington's Cabinet, though without office, but was informed that "the number of Cabinet Ministers should not exceed that of the persons whose responsible situation in office require their being members of it."<sup>2</sup> Pitt's vigorous maintenance of the principles of Cabinet government connects him with the work of Walpole; it also links him with the great Ministers of the nineteenth century whose system has been so clearly described by Bagehot. Both the power and selfishness of the Whig aristocracy and the revival of royal influence by George III had undermined the position of the Cabinet in the government of the country, that position was re-established by Pitt. Much of Pitt's work for the Constitution, however, was the result simply of his personal influence and character. whilst he was in office, principles of Cabinet government were to a considerable extent observed, but they were enforced by his personal power and not widely accepted as established principles.

Special mention must be made of the circumstances of Pitt's resignation and of his attitude to Addington's Government. Pitt had from the outset adopted a progressive outlook towards Irish affairs, and since, under the terms of the Union, the Catholics had been led to believe that emancipation could be hoped for, Pitt felt conscientiously bound at least to introduce a measure for their relief. He proposed to admit them to office on their subscribing to a political, instead of a religious, test, and he also proposed that the

The circumstances of his resignation

<sup>1</sup> Both quotations are from Ency Brit article on Pitt by V. C. Clinton-Baddeley

<sup>2</sup> Medley, *Constit Hist*, p. 128

and his conduct while out of office

payment of tithes be commuted. He could not put forward these measures as part of the Government's programme, since there were wide differences of opinion in the Cabinet, yet his sense of duty compelled him to make this effort on behalf of the Irish Catholics. When he found himself met by the firm opposition of the King as well as that of part of his Cabinet, he resigned. Nevertheless, after Addington had been called to power, Pitt supported the new Government, and even gave the Prime Minister advice on the Treaty of Amiens. His defence must be simply that he placed the national welfare above all other considerations: temporarily he felt unable to return to office, but nevertheless he would not withhold either his advice or his support from the King's government. He had learned from Burke's philosophy of party government that it was no part of the work of the Opposition to offer merely factious obstruction to the Government, and he believed that the force of this argument was doubled by the danger to which England was exposed from Napoleonic France. Further, the King had again reached the verge of insanity. Pitt, like all other trustworthy politicians of the day, dreaded the time when the dissipated and irresponsible Prince of Wales should be called upon to take the reins of government, and he considered almost any step justified which would preserve the King's mental balance and enable his control of national affairs to continue. In 1804 Pitt was recalled to office; during the King's illness he had already pledged himself to the King not again to bring forward the question of Catholic Emancipation. He felt he had saved his conscience and fulfilled his duty to the Irish by his previous resignation, and he therefore now returned resolved to devote himself to the problems caused by the renewal of the European War.

The insanity of the King a disadvantage to Pitt

If the insanity of the King was actually an asset to some of his successors, it was a source of considerable weakness to Pitt. Subsequent Ministers profited by George's incapacity from 1810 onwards, in that it freed them from royal opposition and the danger of a hostile use of royal patronage and prerogative, leaving the Prince of Wales

with his powers severely checked and restricted by Acts of Parliament. In the days of Pitt, on the other hand, his personal position at first was one of great insecurity, the Whig Opposition, led by Fox, was completely unreasonable, and the prospects of a regency opened up problems of considerable novelty.

In 1788 George, who had avoided the dangers of corruption and of an early death by abstinence, suffered an attack of insanity, aggravated by the frugality of his diet. The suspension of the activities of the Crown made the establishing of a regency inevitable, and for the position of Regent there could hardly be any other choice than George, Prince of Wales. It was the constant misfortune of the Hanoverian Kings to have unruly, factious, and obstinate sons. George I had quarrelled with the Prince of Wales, who left the Royal palace for the independence of Leicester House in 1717. On becoming King, George II kept up tradition by quarrelling with his son, Frederick; his grandson, the future George III, was brought up in sullen opposition to the Crown. Now George III's son, George, was carrying on the Prince of Wales's rôle in a worse form than ever: he was dissolute and extravagant; he gambled and drank excessively, even in those days of liberality; he spent £10,000 a year on clothes, and by 1784 was in debt to the extent of £160,000. Three years later his insolvency was met by a grant from Parliament and an increase of his Civil List. Even so, by 1793, he was again in debt to the extent of £370,000, which was paid off by Parliament three years later, and yet by 1816 he still owed £339,000. He cared little for the honour of men or women; despite the fact that he was secretly married to a lady of humble birth, in 1795, he bought his peace with his father by marrying Princess Caroline of Brunswick, from whom he was separated in little more than a year. The Prince was also the King's political enemy, for he allied himself to the hated Fox and his Whig followers.

The Regency  
Bill

and the  
King's  
quarrel with  
the Prince  
of Wales

To this vicious and irresponsible Prince the Regency was to be given. The situation for Pitt was ominous: he had refused to bring forward any Parliamentary measure

make the  
position of  
Pitt critical.



The King's  
recovery

to relieve the Prince of his debts, and he was the open enemy of the Prince's political ally, Fox. Pitt therefore faced the almost certain prospect of political banishment, and prepared to return to the Bar. Personally, he felt satisfied, but he saw with alarm that the Government would rest in the hands of a bad man, surrounded by a pack of ruthless, irresponsible followers, united only by their determination to turn the country's misfortunes to their own advantage. Pitt proposed that the powers of the Regent should be limited by Parliament. Fox, in his indignation, so far forgot the Whig belief in the supremacy of Parliament, as to urge that the Prince was entitled to the Regency, unfettered in any way by Parliamentary limitations. Pitt's scheme was carried: the King's person and the management of the Royal household were to be in the charge of the Queen; no Royal property might be alienated, no peerages were to be granted except to members of the Royal Family of full age, and no office might be granted except during the royal pleasure. Fortunately the King quickly recovered, to the open chagrin of the Opposition, and Pitt remained in office undisturbed. When, in 1810, the King again became insane, the Prince's powers were restricted by a Regency Bill.<sup>1</sup>

Whigs and  
Tories.

Pitt's constitutional position is not entirely unconnected with the rôle he played as a party chief. Hitherto it has been convenient to speak of Whig and Tory parties, though both were extremely elastic combinations of composite groups. The Whigs were associated with the interests of the commercial classes, the defence of the rights of Parliament and the assertion of religious liberty. The Tories were associated with adherence to the rights of the Anglican Church, and, after their fifty years of wandering in the wilderness of opposition, they emerged as the supporters of the powers of the Crown. Now, however, that George's attempt to rule had been defeated, the defence of Parliamentary liberties became less and less a necessary or living party creed, and the question of religious liberty faded more and more into the background. The French

<sup>1</sup> See Grant-Robertson, *Select Statutes*, p. 299

Revolution and the problems of Ireland became fresh party issues, and served to bring about a rearrangement of party alliances. Of Pitt's share in party development it is not easy to speak dogmatically, since his Administrations tended to be national and coalition in character rather than strictly of a party colour. Moreover, Whig and Tory groups still retained their old flexibility, unfettered by anything like modern party discipline.

Pitt headed the group of Whigs who regarded Chatham as their god, and who had recently been led by Shelburne. In 1794 he was joined by the Portland Whigs, whilst the old Tory party, the Crown party, gradually became his supporters. The Whig party at this time was rapidly disintegrating. Burke quarrelled violently with Sheridan, the Whig orator, and shortly afterwards with Fox, the Whig leader; he denounced the French Revolution as barbarous, anarchic and dangerous, though another section of the Whig party regarded it as the French counterpart to the Glorious Revolution of 1688. This was the prelude to the formation of the old and new Whig parties, the old represented by Burke, the new by Fox. Inevitably the old Whigs became the supporters of Pitt's foreign policy and separated more and more from the extreme views of the New Whigs. So whilst there remained a few die-hard Tories, led by Eldon, advocating a policy of simple reaction, there arose a new Tory party, composed of the more progressive Tories and the more cautious Whigs. After the death of Pitt this new party fell under the direction of his great disciple, Canning. Its doctrines were expressed in the new journal, *The Quarterly Review*, first published in 1809, the party advocated a measure of parliamentary reform, admission of Catholic claims and the granting of justice to Ireland. —

The disruption of the Whig party

and the emergence of the Old and New Whigs

The new Tory party

The New Whigs, led at first by Fox, were characterised by their sympathy with the French Revolution and their alliance with the extremely democratic schemes of Burdett, whose programme to a large extent foreshadowed Chartism. They were also the violent opponents of Pitt's coercive measures inspired by fear of France. In 1802 they began

The work of the New Whigs.

to publish *The Edinburgh Review*. Their real leader was eventually Cobbett, and their theorist Bentham.

Pitt favours  
Parliamentary reform

Pitt had been prominent in opposition as an advocate of Parliamentary Reform. In 1782 he supported Burke's motion for Economic Reform—for the abolition of the excessive use of royal patronage and of corruption. He also supported motions to shorten the duration of Parliament and for eradicating bribery, hoping that more frequent elections would produce more independent Commons. He introduced a motion for reform which he repeated the next year. On becoming Chief Minister he did not take the Clerkship of the Pells, a sinecure worth at least £3,000 a year, which then fell vacant, though this would have been accepted as just and reasonable. Instead he granted it to Barré on the condition of surrendering the pension which he was receiving from the Government. Pitt never stooped to jobbery, and offices gradually ceased to be used merely as bribes, it is, however, to be noted that he began the modern tendency to make peerages rewards for political service: before 1801 he had added 140 peers to a House which in 1760 had numbered only 174 Members<sup>1</sup>. Another noteworthy fact is that Government loans were not allocated by Pitt either to personal or political friends, but were open to competitive tender.

and opposes  
corruption

His Reform  
Bill is de-  
feated

Having taken office, in 1785 he led the King to withdraw the royal opposition to Parliamentary Reform, and introduced a Bill to induce thirty-six decayed boroughs to surrender their representation, the owners receiving compensation not exceeding £1,000,000. The seventy-two seats released would be allotted to the counties and to London: copyholders and leaseholders (99,000 persons in all)<sup>2</sup> were to receive the vote. This Bill was defeated, and Pitt did no more for the cause of Reform; the reason for this abandonment was that he realised that the opposition to it was, at that time, insuperable. Pitt saw not only that his scheme had been defeated in the House, but it had received little support from the country: petitions in its favour had been rare. The York Association, which had

and he abandons the  
cause of Re-  
form.

<sup>1</sup> Hunt, *Polit. Hist.*, vol. x, p. 282.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 387.

hitherto championed the cause of Reform, was satisfied that Pitt had done his duty, its members were content to await a riper opportunity, and in the next year the Association was dissolved<sup>1</sup>

By 1789 Pitt had become opposed to Reform schemes. The outbreak of the Revolution and the formation in England of societies whose utterances were often dangerous, if not actually seditious, and whose actions were too often cloaked in an atmosphere of unnecessary mystery and secrecy, only strengthened him in his reactionary attitude. In 1792 he vigorously opposed Grey's motion for Reform, declaring that it was "not a time to make hazardous experiments."<sup>2</sup> Five years later Grey brought forward a detailed scheme, advocating an increase of twenty-one members in the representation of counties, the granting of the franchise to leaseholders and copyholders, the institution of triennial parliaments and the holding of voting on the same day throughout the country. Pitt again spoke against the measure, which was defeated. Schemes of Parliamentary Reform had henceforth no hope of success, and agitation had to be carried on outside Westminster.

The French Revolution inspires a reaction

Just as Pitt had realised the justice of the demand for Parliamentary Reform, so he was alive to the merits of many of the philanthropic causes, much advertised in his day and shortly afterwards. The period from 1783 to 1815 is instinct with reforming zeal and liberal ideas. The abolition of the slave trade, the extension of complete religious toleration to all classes, the reform of the criminal law, the renovation of the Poor Law system, the improvement of prison conditions and the establishment of popular education—these were some of the schemes then widely canvassed. With all these reforms Pitt was in general sympathy. He was prepared to see a further measure of toleration granted to Catholics, though, after consulting the dignitaries of the Church and being warned that the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts would arouse widespread dissatisfaction amongst its members, he opposed the measure for Repeal

Pitt also supports the liberal proposals of his day

for an extension of religious toleration

<sup>1</sup> Davis, *Age of Grey and Peel*, p. 69.

<sup>2</sup> Hunt, *Polit Hist*, vol. x, p. 334

and for the  
abolition of  
slavery

introduced in 1787. In 1791 and 1793, Bills were passed which allowed Catholics freedom of worship and education, and admission to the legal profession only their exclusion from politics remained a serious restriction. In 1787 Pitt supported a motion for the abolition of the slave trade, in the following year, in the absence of Wilberforce, he himself introduced a similar Bill. Two years later he again lent his support to a Bill for abolition, and the struggle in Parliament continued until 1807, the year after his death, when the slave trade was prohibited. The treaties of 1815 took further steps towards the complete abolition of the trade.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, Pitt showed his sympathy with Poor Law Reform by proposing in 1791 to establish Schools of Industry for the poor, where work and maintenance would be provided for the destitute. This measure, however, he had to withdraw.

Pitt's attitude towards Ireland, his measures for its satisfaction, and his part in the Union are noticed elsewhere.<sup>2</sup> His policy was throughout characterised by a sympathetic appreciation of Irish grievances and by a statesmanlike approach to the solution of their problems.

The finan-  
cial burdens  
of the  
country

Pitt held a constitutional position of great historical importance: his interests were wide and genuine, and in every way he showed himself a progressive statesman. But his claim to fame rests primarily upon his ability as a financier. The American War had added £114,500,000 to our National Debt, which now stood at £240,925,908,<sup>3</sup> the interest on this amounted to over £9,500,000.<sup>4</sup> The credit of the country gave cause for concern, for 3 per cent Consols were quoted at 56,<sup>5</sup> and payments to the Civil List were in arrear. The taxes levied in 1781 totalled £25,353,857, an intolerable burden in view of the small size of the population. This represents, in fact, a tax of £2 15s per head—a source of great hardship to all classes, and a crippling restriction on industrial and commercial enterprise.<sup>6</sup> A renovation

<sup>1</sup> See further Chapter XII.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter IX.

<sup>3</sup> *Polit. Hist.*, vol. x, p. 284.

<sup>4</sup> Medley, *Constit. Hist.*, p. 579.

<sup>5</sup> *I.e.*, a £100 Government Stock bearing interest at 3 per cent could be purchased for £56.

<sup>6</sup> In 1913 taxes represented £3 11s 4d, and in 1926 £14 11s 8d per head (*Daily Mail Year Book*, 1929, p. 175).

of the national finances was in these circumstances a positive necessity.

One of the first reforms effected by Pitt was the funding of the unfunded debts. These latter totalled over £14,000,000, and were debts not only on which the Government paid interest, but of which the capital had also to be repaid at an agreed date. Pitt began, in 1783, by funding half of this debt, that is, he led the holders of Government bonds to exchange them for stock, which would never be subject to redemption except at the wish of the Government, but on which the Government would pay interest perpetually. The advantage of this was simply that the Government was released from any necessity to repay the capital borrowed, in return for contracting on behalf of all future generations to pay interest at a fixed rate. Though Pitt, however, had in this way to burden future generations in order to establish the credit of his Government, he would not allow his Administration to undertake expenditure which it could not meet out of its revenue. Thus, when in 1783 he found a deficit of £900,000, he introduced further taxes to meet it, and he consistently attempted to balance his Budgets. Unfortunately when, after ten years of peace, Pitt was forced to enter the war against France, expenditure was bound to exceed revenue, and the difference had to be met by loans on which interest would be paid by future Governments.

Pitt funds  
the unfund-  
ed debts

Pitt also determined to purge the Treasury of corruption. Hence when he raised Government loans he refused to offer them as bribes to friends, but he opened them to competition and accepted the most favourable terms available. He has been blamed for raising loans at low interest and accepting them at much less than their face value.<sup>1</sup> The answer to this criticism is that in this he merely repeated the accepted

and reduces  
corruption

<sup>1</sup> Thus the Government offered 3 per cent interest, and on these terms £50 or £60 would be subscribed for a £100 loan. The Government accepted £50 or £60, but it and its successors paid interest on the nominal value of £100. Thus 3 per cent interest paid on £100 represented a return of 6 per cent to those subscribers who had paid £50 for £100 stock. Thus it is estimated (Rose, *Pitt*, p. 180) that loans of the nominal value of £85,857,691 actually brought the Government only £57,500,000.

policy of his predecessors; and further, that to raise a loan at par, he would have had to offer so high a rate of interest as to make the terms as bad as those he accepted. He attempted to raise loans in the 4 and 5 per cents, but failed to gain favourable terms.

He establishes a Sinking Fund

Pitt did not recklessly burden future generations of citizens. He planned to wipe off the National Debt by the establishment of a Sinking Fund, to which £1,000,000 was to be allotted annually out of the current revenue. This sum was to be used in buying Government stock held by private proprietors; the interest on the stock so purchased was to be used in buying further stock. Hence it was said that the Fund would accumulate at compound interest, but in fact the Government was merely paying out of one hand into the other, for the interest on stock which it received was paid by the Government itself. In this way Pitt's Sinking Fund differed from Walpole's, whose Fund consisted of an allotment of money which was set aside until a sufficient sum was collected and until a favourable opportunity occurred for the complete obliteration of a considerable amount of Debt. The new Sinking Fund also differed from the old in that it was never to be raided to supplement the revenues of the Government, as had frequently been done in the days of Walpole. To ensure the inviolability of the Sinking Fund, it was placed under the control of a permanent Board of Commissioners, entirely independent of the Government; these Commissioners were responsible only for receiving the interest and annual allotment from the Government and for utilising these in the buying of stock.

The War with France interrupts his reforms, but the Sinking Fund is maintained.

After England had entered the war against France it was of course impossible to meet the unprecedented abnormal expenditure out of current revenue, and the National Debt was inevitably increased. In fact, during the course of Pitt's administration, the war added £334,525,436 to the Debt<sup>1</sup>. This entailed the raising of loans at high rates of interest, and Pitt has been blamed for continuing throughout the war years to pay into the Sinking Fund. It has been said that Pitt was paying off loans which held a low rate of

<sup>1</sup> Rosebery, *Pitt*, p. 150.

interest while raising loans at a much higher rate of interest. This criticism is just and cogent. At the same time this can be said in mitigation of Pitt's error. Firstly, though the stock which was being purchased by Pitt had been subscribed to at a lesser discount than that which he was issuing, yet more had been raised at par, so that the loss was not so great as at first would appear.<sup>1</sup> Secondly, it must also be remembered that whilst he allotted only £1,000,000 to Debt reduction, his loans in the years 1793-1801 averaged over £34,500,000, and the saving effected by raising loans of a million less would have been slight.<sup>2</sup> The defence urged by Lord Rosebery is that though many of his more ignorant countrymen believed in the magic of compound interest, yet Pitt fully realised that the interest drawn on stock purchased was paid by the Government: this interest was really met by increased taxation, and the appearance of compound interest being produced from no obvious source was the bait which induced the country to produce that increased taxation. Lord Rosebery says that Pitt was "reluctant to dispel that mirage which induced the population to bear taxation readily, under the belief that a magic machinery was producing gold as fast as it was spent. The Sinking Fund, in fine, inspired confidence."<sup>3</sup> The credit of a Government is so often dependent on popular confidence within and without the country that it was worth while to preserve the appearance of financial prosperity by continuing to reduce the Debt in spite of the expenditure necessitated by the War. Whatever the final verdict on the Sinking Fund, it was considered so satisfactory as to justify its continuance until 1828. In that year it came to an end, and other measures were instituted in 1866

<sup>1</sup> Thus in 1797 Consols fell to 47, but previous loans had very frequently been raised at between 50 and 60. Thus the real interest on many of the loans which Pitt was paying off was between 5 per cent. and 6 per cent., whilst the real interest on the loan he was raising was 6.38 per cent.

<sup>2</sup> It will, of course, be retorted, with equal force, by critics of Pitt's finance, that however slight that saving, it became considerable when estimated for the number of years for which the Debt was contracted.

<sup>3</sup> Rosebery, *Pitt*, p. 155.



and 1878 which have remained operative until the present day.

Pitt reduces duties and establishes a Board of Taxes.

Pitt's desire for sound and orderly finance led him to execute other important reforms. The Treasury was daily being pillaged by hosts of robbers, who enjoyed a lucrative business by evading high duties. To meet this evil, Pitt greatly reduced the duties on tea and spirits—the chief goods carried by smugglers—for example, the duty on tea was lowered from 119 to 12½ per cent.<sup>1</sup> At the same time ships which loitered off the coast were to be subjected to seizure. Where several duties had been levied on one article, Pitt replaced them by one duty, approximately equal to their sum total; this did not produce any great increase in revenue, but it considerably simplified and cheapened the collection of the duties. In addition, whereas the taxes on carriages, carts, and male-servants had been managed by the Excise Department, those on horses by the Commissioners of Stamps, and those on houses and windows by a third Department, Pitt now placed all the taxes under the control of one Board of Taxes. This, again, was an economy which made for efficiency as well as for reduced costs of collection.

Pitt's foreign policy

But Pitt's brilliant fiscal ambitions were left partly unfulfilled because of the outbreak of war with France. He had made for himself the career of a great peace Minister by temperament and training; he was fitted to give to his country the benefits of reforms which twenty years of peace would have made possible. But six years after he took office the French Revolution broke out and reacted with tremendous force on the history of the whole world, and in 1793 England entered the war against France, which completely changed the career of Pitt.

The isolation of England

Before the outbreak of the Revolution, though domestic policy had absorbed the greater part of Pitt's time, foreign policy had received close attention. England had emerged from the War of American Independence without allies. France had been her chief enemy, and was united with Spain by the Family Compact; Austria had

<sup>1</sup> Rose, *Pitt*, p. 184

been England's opponent since 1756, and now was allied with Russia: Prussia had remained sullenly aloof from England because she felt aggrieved over the Peace of Paris in 1763: a Russian alliance as a set-off to the Bourbon Family Compact had for twenty years been the great object of English Foreign Secretaries, but St. Petersburg had declined to entertain any offers. France had a somewhat meaningless and unstable alliance with Austria, but Prussia, like England, was isolated. European politics were dominated by the crafty and ambitious Czarina Catherine and her ally, the Emperor Joseph II, equally ambitious, but hampered by his own idealism. Catherine had set her eyes on securing part of the Polish territory left intact by the First Partition, and on greatly increasing her dominions in the direction of the Black Sea at the expense of Turkey. Joseph II, Emperor and co-Regent with Maria Theresa in the Habsburg dominions since 1765, and sole ruler after her death in 1780, wished to centralise the government of the hereditary Habsburg territories, and to make his power a reality there, even if this entailed surrendering his possession of the distant Netherlands. In his undoubted enlightenment, he designed reforms which were completely misunderstood by his more ignorant subjects, who successfully resented his schemes. England had little to fear from Russia, though her inability to secure the Czarina's friendship was a source of constant uneasiness, for Russia ruled the Baltic, sent two-thirds of her exports to England, and bought from her over three-quarters of her imports.<sup>1</sup> England, on the other hand, had good cause for watchfulness of Joseph II's schemes, for the possession of the Netherlands by a power strong enough to be independent of France had become a cardinal point in British policy.

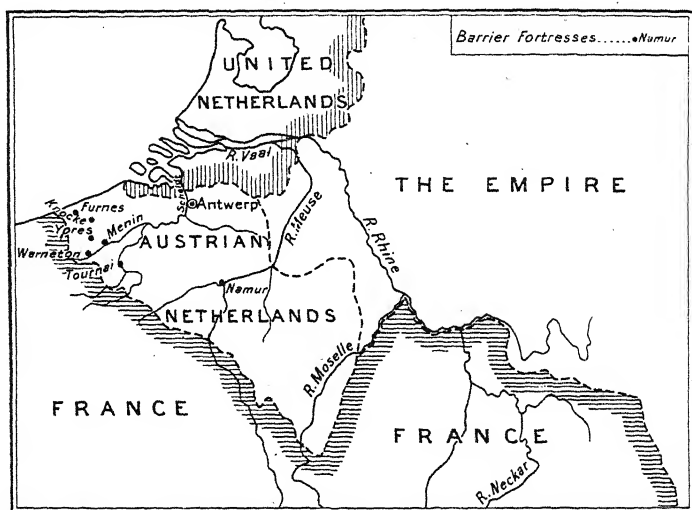
Ever since 1715 the Dutch had had the right of holding seven fortified towns in the south of the Austrian Netherlands, three-fifths of the garrison being supplied by Austria and all the expense being met by the Austrian Netherlands. Since 1748 these payments had ceased, and the fortresses were left with inadequate garrisons and in an unsatisfactory

The ambitions of the Czarina Catherine and the Emperor Joseph.

Joseph II violates the Barrier Treaty and opens the Scheldt.

<sup>1</sup> Rose, *Pitt*, part i., p. 590.

state. Now Joseph II determined to destroy the last vestige of the Dutch possession of the Barrier by razing the fortresses to the ground. Since 1648 the river Scheldt, which was of great strategic and commercial value, had been closed to all foreign navigation and placed under the control of the Dutch. This ruined the trade of Antwerp, which had been reduced to 35,000 or 40,000 inhabitants. Now Joseph II ordered the Dutch to re-open the river to navigation. This was a direct threat to the English merchants who, by the closing of the Scheldt, had been entirely freed



THE NETHERLANDS UNDER JOSEPH II

from Belgian competition. This demand led to the verge of war between Austria and Holland, an outbreak being prevented by the mediation of France, which arranged the Treaty of Fontainebleau in 1785 between the two, and took the opportunity to form a Franco-Dutch alliance. England had merely looked on, for her policy throughout was to avoid European commitments as far as was possible, and France had used the occasion to her own advantage.

He plans an exchange of the Netherlands for Bavaria.

Shortly afterwards Joseph was again working on the scheme over which he had long been pondering. This was to exchange the Austrian Netherlands for Bavaria; by this

he would relinquish his hold upon a distant province where his power could never be effective, for one adjacent to his own dominions. The exchange would have greatly strengthened his power in Southern Germany. Hence the Exchange scheme was firmly opposed by Frederick II of Prussia, who organised a League of German States—the *Furstenbund*—to resist it. It was no part of England's policy to allow the Netherlands to fall into the hands of a comparatively insignificant power which could scarcely hope to resist French influence. Hence George III, as Elector of Hanover, entered the *Furstenbund* officially; this did not commit England in any way, but it provided a beginning for a rapprochement between England and Prussia.

George III  
joins the  
opposition  
to the Ex-  
change

Anxiety for the real independence of the Netherlands also led England into relations with parties in Holland. There the Stadtholder, William V of Orange, was opposed by the Patriots, who sought to restrict his powers and ultimately to establish a Dutch Republic. The Patriots were French in sympathy, and the proposed republic would have been little more than a satellite of the Bourbon Power. Hence England was bound to support the Stadtholder. Her desire to do this was increased by the fact that William V was the cousin of George III. Moreover, his wife was the niece of Frederick the Great of Prussia, who, however, supplied nothing more helpful than conciliatory advice. After his death in 1786, his successor, Frederick William II, was prepared to be of more assistance, and their mutual interest in Dutch affairs soon was to lead to a definite alliance of England and Prussia. In 1787 the Patriots, suspecting the Princess of Orange of going to The Hague to raise forces against them, prevented her from entering the Province of Holland, suspended the Stadtholder from his office, and appealed to France for assistance. This affront to the Princess could not be overlooked by her kinsman, the King of Prussia, and Pitt was unwilling to pass over the possibility of French intervention. He immediately urged Frederick William to action and, before France could form her plans, Prussian forces had crossed the border, put down the Patriot Rebellion and restored the

England  
opposes  
French in-  
fluence in  
Holland

Stadtholder Pitt then elicited from France a declaration that she entertained no hostile intentions. This virtually ended the Franco-Dutch Alliance of 1785.

and forms  
the Triple  
Alliance

These events had paved the way for the formation of the Triple Alliance of England, Holland and Prussia, which was completed in 1788. This was a triumph for Pitt; he had aimed at keeping England clear of all unnecessary continental entanglements, yet, though he did not share unduly in the traditional hatred and suspicion of France, he could not afford to let England remain isolated. Now, without having entered any European conflict, he was able to build up a powerful alliance which could henceforth be used as an instrument for peace in Europe. The strength of the allies was used on behalf of Sweden to prevent her from being dismembered by her greedy neighbours, Denmark and Russia. This was a wise step on the part of Pitt, for had Sweden been partitioned, the Baltic would have become virtually a Russian lake, and English trade would have been seriously damaged. In 1791 the Alliance again mediated to restore peace between Austria and Turkey, hoping by this means to enable Turkey to be an effective check to the growing power of Russia. In the next year, 1792, Pitt indeed tried to bring the Czarina Catherine herself to terms with Turkey, but here he met with a rebuff. War between Turkey and Russia had begun in 1787, and successive campaigns were considerably to the advantage of Russia. England intended to compel Russia to restore all her conquests except the Crimea, and especially opposed the retention by the Czarina of Oczakoff, an important fortress between the Bug and the Dnieper. Pitt was ready to give Prussia every assistance in forcing Russia to accept such terms, and high words passed between the Foreign Offices of England and Russia, but Pitt found himself unsupported by the Cabinet and was obliged to adopt a less spirited attitude. Russia, freed from any threat of English interference, concluded her own terms with Turkey, retaining the line of the Dniester. The action of Pitt on this occasion caused some discontent at Berlin as well as some contemptuous amusement at St. Petersburg.

Pitt's at-  
tempt to  
check the  
Czarina  
leads to a  
rebuff

The relations between England and the Bourbon Powers remain to be noticed. Pitt did not share the popular hatred of France, nor, since falling under the influence of Adam Smith, was he bound by the generally accepted doctrines of Mercantilism. In 1785 he attempted to establish Free Trade between England and Ireland, and was thwarted by the opposition of English merchants and Irish patriots. In the next year, however, he successfully concluded a commercial treaty with France which established a large measure of Free Trade between the two countries. This had been foreshadowed by a recommendation in the Treaty of 1783, and was the work of the French Foreign Minister, Vergennes, rather than of Pitt. This part of the Treaty was, in fact, of considerable value to England, but probably it was detrimental rather than beneficial to France. In spite of the establishment of economic peace, politically the two countries remained sullenly suspicious of each other, as events in Holland showed. But France was becoming more and more preoccupied with her internal maladies, and the clouds of revolution were gathering, so that her influence in Europe was steadily declining.

His commercial treaty with France

With Spain Great Britain came to grips in 1790. Overseas possessions and her interest in expanding trade were exerting a strong influence upon English policy at this time. Behind Pitt's fear of French influence in the Netherlands lay not merely an anxiety to safeguard British maritime power in the Narrow Seas, but also the knowledge that the French were hoping to use the impending bankruptcy of the Dutch East India Company to establish their own power in the Far East. In 1790 English commercial ambitions furnished the cause of the firm attitude adopted towards Spain. British ships had been seized by the Spaniards while fishing in Nootka Sound off Vancouver Island. The English insisted on compensation, and Spain, having little hope of French support, was bound to accede to their demand.

British opposition to Spanish commercial rivalry

For ten years, from 1783 to 1793, England had been slowly regaining European respect by a rigid adherence to her policy of excluding Bourbon influence from the Netherlands,

The French Revolution leads to war in Europe.

by a careful supervision of her colonial possessions and her commerce, and by well-timed advances towards Prussia and Russia. But every calculation of European policy was upset by the outbreak of the French Revolution. By 1792 the Revolution had led to war in Europe. Influenced by the appeals of the émigrés, his own relationship to the French Queen, and his anxiety for the preservation of the monarchy, the Emperor entered into a war with France, and the King of Prussia went to his assistance. France accepted the challenge of Austria. The French armies entered Savoy and Nice, occupied the western bank of the Rhine, and defeated the Austrian army at Jemappes. Having once tasted the wine of victory, the old French thirst for military glory revived, and France entered on a war of aggression—on a war to gain for her the natural frontiers and to spread republican principles throughout Europe.

Great Britain preserves her neutrality, 1789-93,

England so far had been ostentatiously neutral: it was no part of Pitt's plans to interfere in the internal politics of his neighbour, nor had he any desire to become entangled in European affairs from which England would reap little profit. So far was Pitt from anticipating that the Revolution would lead to a crusade of liberty against the rest of Europe, that he believed that chaos and confusion within the country would make France of no account on the Continent. Even George III was inclined to regard the Revolution as the punishment from heaven on France for her assistance to the American rebels in their struggle with England, and he wrote to Pitt, "We have honourably not meddled with the internal dissensions of France and no object ought to drive us from that honourable ground."<sup>1</sup> Pitt, Grenville and the King, as well as all the Radicals, were opposed to a war with the Republic, and in fact there was no considerable body of opinion which demanded it. Pitt had declined to assist the Emperor Leopold, and though the English Ambassador in France was withdrawn after the suspension of the monarchy in 1792, that was not an unfriendly act, for since he had been accredited to the King, there was no lawful reason for remaining in France. Talley-

<sup>1</sup> *Camb. Mod. Hist.*, vol. viii., p. 291.

rand, the Bishop of Autun, was sent to England as the representative of the new French Government to secure either an alliance or a promise of neutrality, but though Pitt declined to commit the country to either, the representative of Revolutionary France had been well received. England might have been willing to recognise the French Republic had a sound and permanent Government been established and had not a war of aggression been started in Europe.

But success against Austria and Prussia bred arrogance, over-confidence and pugnacity in France. The battle of Jemappes and the capture of Brussels had laid the whole of the Austrian Netherlands at the feet of the revolutionaries. England's concern for the Netherlands had become traditional and had been shared by Pitt even in the years of his peace administration. He therefore solemnly warned Dumouriez not to lay his hands on Holland. Dutch republicans were looking, as before, to France for assistance in their attack on the Stadtholder, and England, in reply to an appeal by the States-General, promised to assist William V. When, therefore, the French, after their occupation of the Austrian Netherlands, declared the Scheldt open to navigation, and despatched warships by it to Antwerp, war with England was almost certain. To the honest, conscientious Pitt, and to the legal-minded English people of that time, this was a dangerous attack on treaty rights. The French pleaded the Laws of Nature, but the English were resolved to stand by the Law of Nations. Pitt described the opening of the Scheldt as an attempt to overthrow "the political system of Europe, established by solemn treaties and guaranteed by the consent of all the powers." This question loomed as large in 1792 as it had done in 1702, and as it was to do in 1914.<sup>1</sup> The unscrupulousness of the Republic was further illustrated by the Decree made in 1792, that all territory occupied by the French armies should be subject

but resists  
the French  
threat to the  
Netherlands

<sup>1</sup> England then resisted the invasion of Belgium as a breach of the guarantee of its neutrality by the Powers in the Treaty of London of 1839. The Scheldt had been opened in 1863, but the possession of the Netherlands by a hostile power is as important to England in the twentieth century as it had been in the eighteenth.



to French rule The time was passing when other countries were to be encouraged by French arms to set up republican governments in imitation of the French model, the time had come when the French Republic was to prove itself as ready as the monarchy to annex neighbouring territories.

and the dissemination  
of republican  
propaganda

Then on November 19, 1792, the French Convention issued its decree that it would give "assistance and help to all those peoples who wished to recover their liberty."<sup>1</sup> England had declined to interfere in the internal affairs of her neighbour, but she did not expect France to enter upon a crusade to upset the established governments of other countries To Pitt and his colleagues this was all the more important because they were already alarmed at the growth

The English  
radical agi-  
tation

of dangerous societies in England The Society for Constitutional Information had been founded in 1791, and the London Corresponding Society in the next year. These were not merely societies agitating, like the County Association, among the middle classes for Parliamentary Reform they worked amongst the lowest classes, and though their actions may have been slight and insignificant, their words were high-sounding and alarming Future generations can look back with equanimity, and, far from the restless atmosphere of that time, see that the general fear of these societies and the measures taken to repress them were excessive and unreasonable Many of these societies produced nothing more dangerous than "frothy republican talk which should have been treated with quiet contempt"<sup>2</sup> But their language was often definitely seditious, and still more frequently, dangerous. it is said that in 1793 they distributed 200,000 copies of Paine's defence of the French Revolution—*The Rights of Man*<sup>3</sup> And the fear which they engendered was all the greater by reason of the fact that they acted in secrecy In the days of most imperfect communication and before the organisation of any efficient police force, every rumour was wildly exaggerated and could be subjected to no accurate investigation. Hence when these societies sent missions with congratulations which were warmly received

seeks the  
favour of  
the revolu-  
tionaries

<sup>1</sup> *Camb Mod Hist*, vol viii, p 297

<sup>2</sup> Rose, *Pitt*, part II., p. 114.

<sup>3</sup> Rose, *Pitt*, part II., p. 168.

by the French Assembly, the English Government began to see the beginnings of a design to plunge England into that chaos of barbarism which seemed to accompany "liberty" in France. It was necessary to repress these English democratic societies. Pitt, who had once said that the Revolution would "terminate in general harmony and regular order," in "freedom rightly understood, freedom resulting from good order and good government,"<sup>1</sup> began to realise how greatly he had been mistaken, and to see that the Revolution meant disorder in France and sedition in England.

The execution of the King was the last event which rendered war between England and France inevitable. That war must sooner or later have begun in any case, but the cruel fate of Louis precipitated it. The news reached London on January 23, and on the next day, Chauvelin, the French Ambassador, was ordered to quit the kingdom. On February 1 France declared war on England and Holland. Nevertheless, Great Britain did not take up arms with the object of restoring the French monarchy. She entered the war, not as Austria and Prussia had done, to re-establish the power of the Bourbons—to check this had been the cardinal principle of her policy throughout the whole of the century—but to defend her own monarchy and her trade. England was resolved merely to confine France within her own boundaries and to prevent the Republic from forcing disruptive propaganda upon other countries: with the internal organisation of her neighbour's government she had no concern. Soon the war became more clearly than ever a mere incident in England's long struggle for commercial supremacy and the acquisition of overseas possessions—a continuation of the wars of the eighteenth century. A counter-crusade against republicanism, a defence of the Bourbons, it never became in the minds of the English statesmen, though this was what Burke and the philosophers wished it to be.<sup>2</sup>

The entrance  
of Britain  
into the war  
precipitated  
by the exe-  
cution of  
Louis XVI

<sup>1</sup> *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, vol. xxvii. (1912), "Burke, Windham and Pitt," by J. H. Rose, p. 702.

<sup>2</sup> See *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, vol. xxvii (1912), "Burke, Windham and Pitt," by J. H. Rose.

The demand  
for reforms  
in England

The outbreak of the French Revolution and the opening of the war between England and France had a tremendous influence upon English history, and was a turning-point in the career of Pitt. Since the middle of the century discontent with the Constitution had been growing. Something had been done to reduce corruption; the agitation for Parliamentary Reform was becoming steadily more insistent. The people of the country were awakening from their lethargy. New large towns were growing up. Pitt and a large number of enlightened politicians were ready for concessions to popular demands, until the Revolution came. The example which France now offered considerably stimulated the more extreme wing of the popular movement in England. There arose the Revolutionary Society, the Society for Constitutional Information, and many provincial clubs in Manchester, Leeds, Norwich, and other industrial and commercial towns, all in communication with the Jacobins of France. Political agitation, with widespread social and economic discontent amongst the lower classes, caused by the upheaval of the agrarian and industrial revolutions, led to riots in Sheffield, Dundee, and other towns. In Ireland, too, the Revolution produced a new spirit of resistance to English oppression.

is attacked,  
by Burke

Although popular discontent became more widespread and more serious, cultured English society became thoroughly reactionary. Burke, in 1790, published his *Reflections on the French Revolution*, in which he denounced the Revolution as a destructive attack on a venerable Constitution and on the sacred institution of monarchy. He prophesied the barbarity and terrorism to which it would lead, and declared that the Revolution would terminate in a Dictatorship. Though at first "by half the nation considered as little better than an ingenious madman,"<sup>1</sup> his book "turned the stream of public opinion throughout Europe against the National Assembly." This reaction steadily and progressively deepened when the Revolution led to a war against the monarchies of Europe, when the cry of Liberty became the plea of aggression, and when France supported the European

<sup>1</sup> *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, vol xxvii., p. 701.

tyranny of Napoleon Pitt was entirely converted to the side of reaction He abandoned all his projects of liberal reforms and, after the outbreak of war, he subordinated everything to its successful prosecution He had proved himself a peace Minister of the first order for that, nature had eminently fitted him He was now compelled to become a war Minister, for which nature had not fitted him Just as the Revolution and the war forced Burke and Pitt to become the founders of a new Tory party, so it hastened the breach between two sections of the Whigs Fox and the New Whigs defended the right of the French to destroy the Bourbon tyranny, as Locke had championed the right of the English to abolish the despotism of the Stewarts Thus between Burke and Fox and their respective followers there developed an incurable rift The extreme Whigs became more and more discredited as the war progressed They continued to defend the policy of the French, to assert that England was seeking to dictate the course of French internal affairs, and they persistently harassed the Government, even in the face of serious foreign danger On all sides, therefore, they were accused of assisting our enemies and of betraying their country into the hands of the French The cause of reform in England was thus damned in the eyes of the governing classes, and the prospects of the extreme Whigs were severely dimmed.

and ceases  
to have the  
support of  
Pitt

The rift in  
the Whig  
party

There ensued a time of coercion, inspired by fear and panic. Not only was the cause of political reform completely checked, but serious invasions were now made upon the liberty of the subject This fear was often genuine and sincere English people saw with alarm the imprisonment of the French King, the capture of the Bastille, and the massacre of the King's Swiss Guards: every horror of the Revolution and the Terror was magnified by current rumour The Government saw also in England a great economic revolution, which created social upheaval and unrest, economic distress and immense problems for the Ministry: it realised the rottenness of the Constitution and saw political agitation deepening daily Often the alarm was deliberately exaggerated in order to strengthen the hands of the Govern-

The period  
of reaction

The liberty  
of the sub-  
ject is re-  
stricted

and the  
radicals are  
persecuted

ment in its many difficult tasks. In 1793 Bills were passed, subjecting immigrants to police supervision and empowering the Secretary of State to expel them if he thought this desirable, and making it treason to supply arms, military or naval stores to the enemy. The Corresponding Societies Act abolished the London Corresponding Society, and suppressed all societies which imposed an oath other than that prescribed by law, which concealed the names of their members, or which appointed secret officers. In the next year the Habeas Corpus was suspended, and in 1795 a new Treason Bill and a Seditious Meetings Bill were added.<sup>1</sup> The Treason Bill made it treason to engage in any plot to do bodily harm to the King, or to arouse hatred of the King or the Constitution by word or writing.<sup>2</sup> The Seditious Meetings Bill forbade any meeting of over fifty persons of which notice had not been given to a magistrate. In 1799 and 1800 Combination Acts were passed which prohibited the formation of combinations among workmen, for economic and political unrest had accompanied each other and were equally suspect. A series of trials followed upon these Acts. Frost, a member of the London Corresponding Society, was sentenced, in 1793, to six months' imprisonment and to stand an hour in the pillory. Muir, a founder of the Glasgow Society of the Friends of the People, was ordered to be transported for fourteen and Palmer for seven years: three others, Margarot, Scirving, and Gerrald, all accused of sedition, were transported. Other trials followed in 1794, but Pitt's repressive policy had gone too far: the charges could not be proved, and Hardy, Horne Tooke, and Thelwall, all leaders of popular societies, were acquitted. During the years of the war, though repression never again became so openly severe, the subject had his liberty rigorously curtailed in the alleged interests of public safety and national unity.

<sup>1</sup> See Grant-Robertson, *Select Statutes* pp 273 and 277

<sup>2</sup> The Bill thus gave *statutory* recognition to the judicial interpretations evolved by the Courts during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries but of which juries were sometime sceptical. In the cases of Hardy and Horne-Tooke in 1794, the jury refused to accept seditious and inflammatory writing as proof of treasonable intention and the accused were acquitted much to the chagrin of the Government.

The occasion of the passing of this Act was an attack on the King whilst on his way to the opening of Parliament.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE WAR WITH FRANCE, 1793-1815

THE entrance of England into the war with France led to the formation of the First Coalition, consisting of England, Prussia, Austria, Holland, Spain and Sardinia. Prussia, however, gave little assistance, for from 1792 her attention was occupied in the partition of Poland. Austria joined in the division of Polish territory, and in 1795 the Third Partition Treaty extinguished the kingdom. Meanwhile the war with France was being inadequately prosecuted. The French invaded Holland and were defeated. Dumouriez, their general, deserted to the allies. The Royalists raised a rebellion in La Vendée and in the south, and the city of Toulon was handed over to the English fleet.

The First  
Coalition.

By the end of 1793 the allies were checked on the north-eastern frontier, Toulon retaken by the revolutionaries, the Vendéan rebellion suppressed, and the Spaniards driven out of France. The English fleet had, however, reduced Martinique, St. Lucia and Guadeloupe. In the next year the French advanced against the allies, reoccupied Brussels, and forced the Dutch and Austrians to retreat. The only success of the allies was the naval victory of the English at the Battle of the First of June. By the end of the year the French were able to advance into Holland, and to occupy Amsterdam. In the next year the Stadtholder was forced to flee to England, and the Batavian Republic was established.

Early cam-  
paigns.

In 1795 the Directory in France came into existence. Napoleon Bonaparte, who had won some distinction as an army officer at the recapture of Toulon, was entrusted with the command of the Italian campaign in 1796. After completely defeating the Austrians at the battles of Castiglione, Arcola and Rivoli, he imposed the Treaty of Campo-

The  
"black"  
year, 1797

Formio upon Austria (1797). The year was black indeed for England. Lack of bullion in the country forced the Bank to suspend cash payments, prices were at an unprecedented height, the amount of shipping cleared from English ports stood at a figure lower than that for any year since 1793 and far below the peace level<sup>1</sup>. The secession of Spain from the Coalition in the previous year had already forced England's fleet to leave the Mediterranean. Austria, her last ally on the Continent, had been obliged to make peace: her only hope lay in her navy, which had repelled an attempted invasion of Ireland in 1796, and had defeated the combined French and Spanish fleets off Cape St. Vincent (1797). But now discontent in the service led to a mutiny of the fleet at Spithead and a more violent mutiny of the fleet at the Nore, for the latter, French revolutionary propaganda was partly responsible. Luckily concessions at Spithead and firmness at the Nore suppressed the mutinies: Admiral Duncan acted with courage in his watch upon the Dutch fleet, which he defeated at Camperdown.

Bonaparte's  
invasion  
scheme

In 1798 revolution broke out in Ireland. Bonaparte planned an invasion of England, and transports for 24,000 men lay in the harbour of Boulogne, whilst 56,000 men were quartered in the north of France. When this failed, satisfied with his previous military success in Europe, he planned a more ambitious stroke: he slipped out of Toulon, evaded Nelson's fleet, captured Malta from the Knights of St John, and landed in Egypt. His objects were to secure Egypt for the French: "to drive England from all their possessions in the East and above all destroy their entrepôts in the Red Sea and to ensure the free and exclusive possession of the Red Sea for the French Republic"<sup>2</sup>. The Battle of the Pyramids gave him command of Egypt, but his fleet was destroyed by Nelson at the Battle of the Nile; he himself was held up in Syria by Sir Sidney Smith at the siege of Acre, and was then induced to return to France by the course of domestic affairs.

His attack  
on Egypt

The departure of Bonaparte from Europe, and the con-

<sup>1</sup> *Camb Mod Hist*, vol viii, p. 486

<sup>2</sup> Instructions of the Directory. Rose, *Napoleonic Studies*, p. 171.

tinued animosity of Austria to France, made possible a new alliance of Austria and England—the beginning of the Second Coalition—and by 1799 Austria had re-entered the war. Russia for the first time entered the struggle, and the great Russian general, Suvorov, lent the Austrians valuable assistance. The Roman and Parthenopean Republics (Naples), recently established, were occupied by Austria, but elsewhere—in Switzerland, in Holland and on the Rhine—the French held their own. Prussia had shown some intention of assisting the allies, but decided not to risk further defeat. The Russian armies withdrew at the end of 1799, and in the same year Bonaparte, having left Syria for France, overthrew the Directory and established the authority of the Government of Three Consuls, of whom he was the chief.

The Second  
Coalition

By 1800 Bonaparte was ready for action against Austria. He defeated her armies at Marengo whilst his general, Moreau, won the Battle of Hohenlinden, and in 1801 she concluded the Peace of Lunéville. Then Bonaparte took the initiative in inducing the Czar Paul to revive the League of Armed Neutrality against England. The members of the League were Russia, Prussia, Sweden, and Denmark. England's retort to this was the bombardment of Copenhagen by the English fleet, which, together with the death of the Czar, resulted in the dissolution of the League.

England  
again iso-  
lated

England again stood alone in her opposition to France. The Union with Ireland was carried through as a measure of defence against France, but in 1801 Pitt went out of office. Addington, who replaced him, concluded the Peace of Amiens. This was only an armed truce. War was renewed in 1803, nominally because of the refusal of the English to surrender Malta to the Knights of St. John under the protectorate of the Czar Alexander, in accordance with their promise at the Peace. But the real cause lay in the conviction that no peace could be secure while the power and ambition of Bonaparte remained unbroken, and in the knowledge that he was using the opportunity to prepare for fresh schemes and to ruin English trade. The measures for preventing continental trade with England were being vigorously enforced by the First Consul, he

The Peace of  
Amiens and  
the renewal  
of the war



maintained French troops in Holland and kept its ports closed to English business he despatched Colonel Sebastiani to inspect the position in Egypt and General Decaen was commissioned to draw up a review of Indian affairs. It was clear that Bonaparte had in no wise abandoned his intention to get control of England's trade route to the East.

Bonaparte's  
invasion  
scheme

He now planned an invasion of England: a flotilla of flat-bottomed boats and an army of 120,000 men were quartered at Boulogne, the French fleets were ordered to be ready to co-operate. While waiting for a favourable opportunity to put his scheme into effect, he overran George III's electorate, and occupied Naples so that its ports should be closed to English trade. The success of the invasion depended on the union of the Brest and Toulon fleets, and all hope of success vanished when Admiral Villeneuve, having escaped from Toulon in a desperate effort to effect the union, was caught and overwhelmed by Nelson at Trafalgar.

Trafalgar

Napoleon meanwhile had become Emperor. On the other side, Pitt, who had returned to power in 1804, was labouring to weld together a new Coalition. In 1805, Austria and Russia re-entered the war, but Prussia, hoodwinked by Napoleon's offer to cede Hanover to her, maintained an obstinate neutrality. The Coalition did not last long: Napoleon crushed the army of Austria at Ulm, and overwhelmed a combined force of Austrians and Russians at Austerlitz. The immediate result was the withdrawal of Austria from the War, the Emperor Francis signing the Treaty of Pressburg.

The death  
of Pitt.

His distaste  
for the war

In the next year Pitt died. He was by nature a peace Minister. His interests lay in financial reform and commercial development. He referred to the struggle with Napoleon as "so bloody and wasting a war":<sup>1</sup> the war was none of his choosing, but one which he could not avoid. He opened negotiations for peace in 1795, 1798, and 1804, and although out of office at the time, assisted in the making of the Peace of Amiens.

His pacific  
nature

Pitt's pacific nature accounted for his failure as a war minister. He could not appreciate Grenville's advice that

<sup>1</sup> Rosebery, *Pitt*, p. 137.

"it would be ten times safer and cheaper too to face the storm than to shrink from it"<sup>1</sup> His peace proposals were with reason opposed by the King, and those of 1797 were opposed even by Grenville. It is true that his administration before the outbreak of war had removed a good deal of corruption, had set the finances of the country on a sound basis and had re-established its credit. England and Holland were the only solvent countries. England was the only country which calculated its expenditure in advance and met this by a Budget.<sup>2</sup> But to have credit and sound finance was of little avail unless they were effectively employed in the war.

Pitt made the fatal mistake of underrating the power of Republican France. He believed that the chaos and anarchy which arose in the later stages of the Revolution would make France of no account in Europe. Consequently he imagined that the war would be short. In 1793 he declared "it will be a very short war and certainly ended in one or two campaigns," and even in 1799 he was still "hoping that six months would see the thing out."<sup>3</sup>

He under-  
rates the  
power of  
France

He never took adequate measures to reduce France. He rushed into schemes hastily, despatched them without preparation, and, after their failure, sank back into inaction and peace negotiations. Until 1798, when Nelson won the Battle of the Nile and locked Napoleon's army in Egypt, England never took the offensive, and even that opportunity to crush our opponent was by slackness and ineptitude allowed to pass away. The launching of a well-directed attack by a well-disciplined force of adequate size, early in 1793 or 1794, might well have been decisive. France was divided by jealousies; there were royalist risings within the country; the military re-organisation of Carnot had not yet converted the revolutionary army into a seasoned or adequately equipped force. The Revolution had begun by breaking up the monarchic army and navy, whose reformation was bound to be the work, not of weeks or months,

and fails to  
concentrate  
British at-  
tacks

<sup>1</sup> Grenville, *Dropmore Papers*, vol. III, p. 378. Cited from Fortescue, *Brit. Statesmen of the Great War*, p. 125.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 63.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 182.

but of years. A more favourable opportunity then existed for a decisive attack on France than was ever to arise subsequently yet no real effort was made to undertake any large-scale action.

He attaches  
too much  
importance  
to the  
colonial  
struggle

Pitt's strategy in the war was fundamentally unsound. The war in 1793 may have opened as a defensive attempt to confine France within her own boundaries, but it soon became a struggle for colonial territory, a mere eighteenth-century war of commerce. Pitt, therefore, concentrated on action in the West Indies and in the East, caring little for the course of military events on the Continent. He failed to see that colonies captured whilst the enemy was effecting conquests on the mainland would have to be restored in any attempt to buy peace. Thus the Peace of Amiens proved, and indeed it proved also that colonial possessions would be only a partial offset to European losses, for, of all her colonial acquisitions, England could retain only Trinidad and Ceylon, whilst by contrast in Europe, Napoleon made very few sacrifices. Pitt left the direction of the war in the hands of Dundas, who regarded colonial conquests as a bribe to the electorate, a sop to the commercial classes who demanded some tangible return for war. As Burke remarked, "All the force we can spare we destine for our indemnity."<sup>1</sup> Windham, the Secretary at War, was still more emphatic, declaring that "the most fatal error will be, I apprehend, the seeking to preserve the popularity of the war by feeding it with conquests."<sup>2</sup>

The cost of  
colonial war-  
fare

The colonial warfare was extremely costly: by 1796 the number dead in the West Indies alone amounted to 40,000—more than Wellington lost in the whole of the Peninsular War,<sup>3</sup> and by the end of the next year we had expended 100,000 men, of whom two-thirds had been wasted in the West Indies. The French West Indies, Trinidad (belonging to Spain), the Cape of Good Hope, Ceylon and Java (belonging to Holland), and Minorca and Malta had been taken. Meanwhile, however, all the British efforts on the Continent

<sup>1</sup> *Eng Hist Rev*, vol. xxvii. (1912), "Burke, Windham and Pitt," by J. H. Rose, p. 707.

<sup>2</sup> Fortescue, *Brit Statesmen of the Great War*, p. III.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 104.

were being wasted in isolated, ill-directed and ill-equipped raids of no military value or motive. An attack was launched on Dunkirk in 1793 by 5,000 men, of whom one-third were useless raw recruits. Another force of a mere 3,000 men was despatched to Toulon, the centre of disaffection to the Republic in the South of France. In 1795 another foolish attack was directed against Quiberon. The revolt of La Vendée was supported by a mere 4,000 men, of whom a quarter were useless; owing to shortage of food and forage this force had to return with nothing accomplished. Even in 1798 Pitt sent a handful of 1,400 men on an expedition to Holland, in 1799, when opinion was divided between an attack on Minorca or an expedition to La Vendée, the meagre English forces were divided, and 5,000 were sent to Minorca and 6,000 to Belle Isle, all being completely wasted. Almost the last act of Pitt was to despatch a handful of 5,000 men to reinforce the army in Sicily preparatory to an Italian campaign, which, after his death, ended in the futile attack on Maida.<sup>1</sup>

The inadequacy of the army was at once a result of political inefficiency and a cause of the unwise military policy. Pitt had practised false economy, so that in 1783 the Infantry of the Line of England was reduced to 3,000,<sup>2</sup> and he could not have collected 20,000 troops within twelve months of the declaration of war.<sup>3</sup> The method of enlistment was crude, inefficient and uneconomical: three guineas were offered to the recruit and two guineas to the recruiting officer for every soldier enlisted,<sup>4</sup> and in 1793 Pitt tried to raise troops by offering commissions, up to the rank of colonel, to those who brought in recruits. The reasons for the general unwillingness to enlist were that the soldier was paid barely a subsistence wage, and that the conditions of service were unbelievably bad. The pay was often heavily in arrears and subject to excessive stoppages, out of which the Commander-in-Chief frequently made profit. In 1790

The inadequacy of the military forces

and the unsatisfactory conditions of service

<sup>1</sup> Fortescue, *Ibid.*, pp. 96-98, 114-116, 134, 152, 178

<sup>2</sup> Fortescue, *Hist. of Brit. Army*, vol. III, p. 500

<sup>3</sup> Fortescue, *Brit. Statesmen of the Great War*, p. 88

<sup>4</sup> Fortescue, *Hist. of Brit. Army*, vol. III, p. 519

the King himself called for an account of the debts of poor soldiers, an increase of pay was made in 1792, and five years later it was trebled.<sup>1</sup> Desertions were frequent and discipline was so bad that Sir Ralph Abercromby said of the army of Ireland, "It was in a state of licentiousness which must render it formidable to everyone but the enemy."<sup>2</sup> There was no Commander-in-Chief at Home from 1784-94, and the equipment of expeditions was hasty and inadequate. The militia was as badly organised as the regular army, and was made still more ineffective by Pitt's organisation of the Volunteers, consisting of isolated bands "all incoherent, all jealous, all undisciplined and all useless."<sup>3</sup> No proper organisation of the home defence was effected, and in 1798 General Humbert was not only able to land on the Irish coast, but also to defeat the English Regulars and to maintain his force there intact for a fortnight.

Conditions  
in the navy

Pitt took more care of the navy. He organised an inquiry into the state of the fleets and dockyards, fortified Plymouth and Portsmouth, and allotted £2,400,000 to the building of warships.<sup>4</sup> As a result, at the outbreak of the war, there were 113 ships of the line, of which ninety were in fighting trim.<sup>5</sup> Yet the naval force had been reduced in 1792 to 16,000 men,<sup>6</sup> and conditions in the navy were almost as bad as those in the army—so bad, in fact, that the mutinies of 1797 had real justification in grievances which imperatively demanded redress. The pay of the sailors had remained at the rates of Charles II's reign, punishments were severe, and so great was the fear of desertion that leave was refused when ships put into port.

Pitt relies  
too much  
on the  
Coalitions

Pitt failed also to appreciate the advice of Sir Henry Calvert, when he urged "we must depend on our own exertions."<sup>7</sup> He placed his confidence in European Coalitions. Under his administration subsidies amounting to

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 521 and 523.

<sup>2</sup> Fortescue, *Brit. Statesmen of the Great War*, p. 129.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 103.

<sup>4</sup> Rose, *Pitt*, part 1., p. 206.

<sup>5</sup> Hunt, *Polit. Hist.*, vol. x, p. 351.

<sup>6</sup> Grant-Robertson, *England under Hanoverians*, p. 359.

<sup>7</sup> Fortescue, *Brit. Statesmen of the Great War*, p. 183.

over £9,000,000<sup>1</sup> were paid to allies. Meanwhile no large English army was raised, and England was responsible for no major military action. The Coalitions effected little, Prussia, in particular, accepted England's money without putting her promised quota of troops into the field. Prussia and Austria quarrelled bitterly in the First Coalition, and Prussia withdrew from the war in 1795. Russian disagreement with Austria wrecked the Second Coalition, whilst the Third depended on the fickle, unstable character of the Czar Alexander. Prussia was devoured by inveterate hatred of Austria, Russia rendered the greatest possible service to France by her Partition of Poland, which caused further disagreement among the allies. England did little to check the conflicting policies of the members of the Coalitions: she devoted her attention to the colonial struggle and repeatedly irritated her Austrian ally by her inactivity in the Mediterranean. Pitt's impenetrable reserve, his inherent caution, and his dislike of the war prevented him from commanding European confidence; he had neither the strength of will nor the fascination of character to weld his Coalitions into an effective force. The difficulties were great, greater perhaps than Napoleon's, for he had fewer allies than subjects, and criticisms of Pitt merely point out his deficiencies and do not in any way minimise the greatness of the task he faced.

and fails to  
secure unity  
of action

Because he never realised the strength of revolutionary France, Pitt was always prone to exaggerate the power of the French royalists. He constantly overestimated their willingness and their ability to overthrow the Revolutionary Government. Pitt was constantly misled by his own optimism and confidence: hence he persistently exaggerated the value of Prussia. Thus, in 1799, though a favourable opportunity presented itself for an Italian campaign, if Sicily were used as the base and advantage taken of the command of the Mediterranean, Pitt again directed our efforts to Holland, hoping by this to induce Prussia to re-enter the contest on his side.

He over-estimates the  
power of his  
allies

The failure of Pitt's military policy was partly due to

<sup>1</sup> Rosebery, *Pitt*, Appendix A

Divided  
counsels in  
the Cabinet

divided counsels in his Cabinet. It was not now that the King undermined the power of his Ministers, for George III not only supported Pitt completely, but could also have given him much excellent advice on European and military affairs, but Whig jealousy and self-seeking were now at work. Pitt left the direction of the war to Dundas (later Lord Melville), the Secretary of State for War, and between him and Windham, the Secretary at War, there were constant differences<sup>1</sup>. Further, the chaos of departmental organisation was evident in that the militia was under the control of the Home Office.

and in the  
services

There were further mischievous disagreements between the political and the military officials. When General Stuart, who had been given the command of the expedition to Portugal in 1798, dismissed lazy and insubordinate officers in his forces, they were immediately reinstated by the Duke of Portland.<sup>2</sup> Pitt did little to compose these differences: he did not exert himself to effect unity in the Cabinet, nor even to ensure that divergent policies were not pursued at the same time. He knew that the Radicals clamoured for peace in the House and in the country, he knew that his Cabinet was composed of heterogeneous and divergent elements, and he sought to preserve peace by avoiding difficulties and by allowing his colleagues to agree to differ. His tolerance, his sympathetic appreciation of conflicting points of view, led him to irresolution and inaction. As Windham remarked, "He had a sort of inveterate prudence, an instinctive horror of indiscretion, which would never suffer those qualities which used to carry with them the enthusiasm of mankind to have their full scope"<sup>3</sup>. Though he had the respect of all his followers, he lacked the power to inspire them with his own ideas, and he had not the energy of mind or the initiative to decide on a policy and to enforce its adoption.

Pitt fails to  
compose  
these differ-  
ences

<sup>1</sup> Criticism of Dundas has been considerably modified by modern opinion. See H. Furber, *Henry Dundas* (1931), and C. Matheson, *Life of Henry Dundas*.

<sup>2</sup> Fortescue, *Brit. Statesmen of the Great War*, p. 138.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40.

Yet, when every criticism has been made, it may well be doubted whether a better Minister could have been found. In 1802, Canning declared "Whether Pitt will save us, I do not know, but surely he is the only man that can"<sup>1</sup> Auckland wrote in 1794, "You would all be kicked out before the end of the session if there was a suitable man to put in the place of Pitt"<sup>2</sup> Fox and his followers were even more pacific than Pitt, they had no sounder military ideas and no more administrative ability. Those who, after the deaths of Pitt and Fox, took charge and brought the war to a successful conclusion, were trained under Pitt, and succeeded in vastly different circumstances from those in which Pitt laboured. At least Pitt had optimism and courage: he was indomitable. He was always ready for peace, never for surrender. In 1797, in 1801 and in 1806 England stood practically alone, yet Pitt's courage never faltered. He lacked the faculty of his father to take the initiative, he possessed too much caution and prudence to act on the offensive, but he had all the fortitude necessary to keep England firmly attached to her task of resisting France and Napoleon to the end.

Pitt's  
dogged  
courage

In 1806, the year of Pitt's death, Prussia, whose delay in entering the war had been a serious obstacle to the Coalition, resumed hostilities against Napoleon. She was now fighting alone, unsupported except by England, and within a week her army had been completely overthrown at Jena, and ten days later the French army occupied Berlin. Prussia collapsed and Russia was the only important European power still opposed to France. In the next year, therefore, Napoleon turned against Russia. The Battle of Eylau provided a surprise: both the French and Russians claimed the victory; losses were about equally divided, but the Russians withdrew in good order. The Battle of Friedland, however, which followed shortly afterwards, was definitely a victory for the French, and though the Russian army was not destroyed nor its power broken, yet Russia's morale was seriously reduced and she no longer desired to continue the

Prussia  
crushed by  
Napoleon

<sup>1</sup> Fortescue, *Ibid.*, p. 174.

<sup>2</sup> Grant-Robertson, *England under the Hanoverians*, p. 381 n.



The Treaty  
of Tilsit

struggle There followed the famous interview between Napoleon, the Emperor of the French, with Alexander, the Emperor of Russia, on the raft at Tilsit The two Emperors became sworn allies, united in their determination to crush England Napoleon, with characteristic sagacity, exacted practically nothing from Russia except the Ionian Islands, but urged Alexander to extend his power at the expense of Sweden and Turkey Now Napoleon wreaked his vengeance on Prussia: her territories on the Rhine were taken from her and made into the kingdom of Westphalia, which would be an outpost of French defence her Polish territories were added to the new Grand Duchy of Warsaw

England's  
isolation

European resistance to Napoleon was at an end. Prussia and Austria had been reduced to abject surrender, Russia had been dazzled into a fantastic, grandiose alliance; only England remained to check his ambition England had no army for him to meet, and had never placed any large force in Europe Napoleon had no fleet to meet the English, his attempt in 1798 to seize her colonial power had failed, his plan of invasion in 1805 had been wrecked by his lack of naval power He now elaborated a scheme which, though not entirely novel, was in its completeness new He believed that England was entirely dependent upon her export trade, and that if this could be crippled, her power would be broken. Even monarchic France, in time of war, had restricted neutral trade with belligerents, and the Republic in 1796 had ordered the detention, and in 1797 the seizure, of all ships carrying British goods. Immediately after the French occupation of Berlin, Napoleon issued the Berlin Decree The British Isles were declared to be in a state of blockade. British ships were forbidden to enter the ports of France or those of her allies, and all trade with Britain was prohibited: neutral vessels carrying English goods were also to be excluded The Milan Decree, which followed in the next year, ordered the seizure of all neutral vessels which touched at a British port; and the Fontainebleau Decree of 1810 completed the Continental System by ordering that colonial or British goods, wherever found, should be confiscated and burnt. England retaliated by

Napoleon  
establishes  
the Contin-  
ental System

her Orders in Council which forbade neutrals to trade between the ports of France and her allies on pain of confiscation and England retaliates

The System was never completely enforced, Napoleon was obliged to issue licences to allow the importation of certain British manufactured goods which were indispensable his own army in 1812 had overcoats made in Great Britain. On her side, England modified her Orders in Council in 1809, and after 1811 made little effort to enforce them. she also issued licences which permitted extensive evasion of her Orders by neutrals

The attempt to crush England's trade failed. Napoleon made no effort to seize the food supplies, he merely tried to cripple Britain's export trade, so that the Continental System was not an attempt to starve Britain into submission but to make her bankrupt. The Decrees and the Orders in Council placed severe restrictions on the trade of neutrals, and led both France and England into difficulties with neutral powers, but as England was in a better position to enforce her restrictions, their resistance to England was greater than to Napoleon. In 1807 the United States of America laid an embargo on foreign vessels in American ports, to which Napoleon replied by confiscating all American ships in his ports. America also forbade all trade with England and France, and her hatred of the English claim to search neutral vessels was the direct cause of the War of 1812, in which she failed in her attempt to conquer Canada, but scored several minor victories over English squadrons at sea.

For Napoleon, however, the Continental System had other and more far-reaching consequences. Its success depended upon his ability to close the continent of Europe to British shipping, for the opening of ports in any quarter would be fatal. With the dependencies of France there was little difficulty, and Prussia, Russia, Austria, Spain, Italy and Denmark were compelled to accept the System. But its maintenance entailed constant enforcement upon unwilling countries: it contributed to the rising of Spain, it entailed the annexation of Holland, it was the direct

The Orders in Council provoke a war with the United States

The Continental System necessitates further Napoleonic campaigns

cause of the war of 1812 with Russia, and one of the reasons for the rising of Prussia

and pro-  
vokes  
national  
risings

The real burden of the Continental System fell upon the consumers of Europe. Goods were often scarce and difficult to obtain: prices became steadily higher, so that the profits obtainable amply compensated the English merchants who were ready to run the risks of engaging in the forbidden trade. Hence, because this burden fell directly upon the peoples of European countries, and because it was so patently due to the tyranny of a foreign autocrat, it contributed considerably to the development of national antagonism to Napoleon.

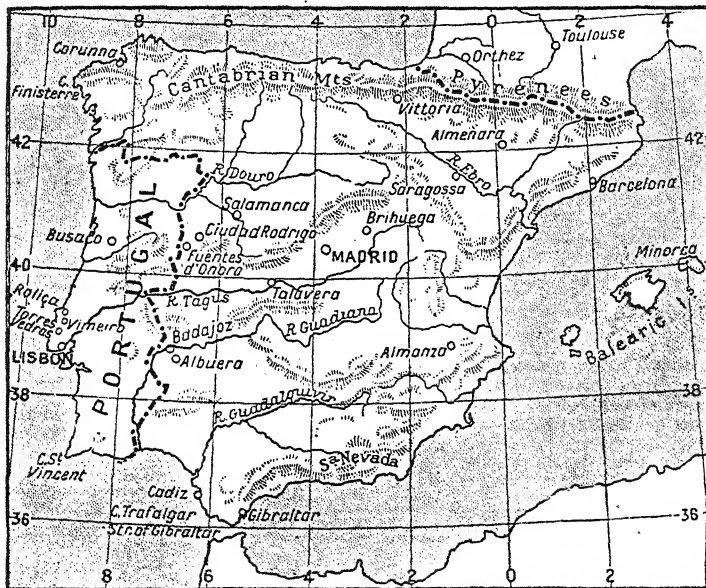
Britain  
seizes the  
Danish and  
Portuguese  
fleets

The first result of the Treaty of Tilsit was that England, having good reason to believe that the Danish navy was about to be seized by Napoleon for his own use, despatched a fleet to Copenhagen, bombarded the town, and forced the Danish fleet to surrender to the English. This was a high-handed action which caused great irritation at the time, and can be defended only by appeal to the laws of necessity and self-defence. In the same year, 1807, Napoleon determined to coerce the Government of Portugal, where the Regent obstinately declined to become the ally of either France or England. Canning took control of the Portuguese fleet and the Regent was transported to Brazil. The fleet left Lisbon only just in time, for Napoleon had already begun the occupation of Portugal.

The Penin-  
sular War

This was the beginning of the end for Napoleon: Portugal, which had been so easily occupied, was soon alienated by the oppression of the Conqueror, and rose in revolt. An English army, under Sir Arthur Wellesley, defeated the French at Vimiero. Unfortunately Wellesley was recalled, the victory was not followed up, and the Convention of Cintra was concluded on the basis of the evacuation of Portugal by the French. In the same year, taking advantage of Court intrigues, Napoleon induced Charles IV to surrender his throne, which was conferred on Napoleon's brother, Joseph. The Spaniards resisted this and there began the Peninsular War, which lasted until 1813, described by Napoleon as a running sore. Wellesley was despatched to

Portugal in 1809. Secure in the possession of Lisbon, and with his communications guarded by the co-operation of the English fleet, he designed to wear down French resistance. Having chosen favourable defensive positions, he would encourage the French to waste themselves in hopeless attack: in his guerilla warfare even victory would advantage the French little, for as soon as one force had been beaten, another would spring up to take its place. He



THE SPANISH PENINSULA

put heart and confidence into the Spanish people. In 1809 he defeated the French under Marshal Soult at Oporto and obliged them to retreat: he then inflicted a second defeat on the enemy at Talavera. Before a force of superior numbers he was obliged to retreat to Badajoz. Next year, Wellesley, now Lord Wellington, was able to check Masséna and a French army at Busaco: then, having retreated into the impregnable lines of Torres Vedras, he led the French to exhaust themselves by a month of weary and fruitless attacks. In 1812, Wellington took Ciudad Rodrigo and

Badajoz, crushed the French at Salamanca and occupied Madrid. Again the superiority of numbers on the French side forced Wellington to retreat into Portugal: but in 1813 he again advanced and defeated them at Vittoria. By the end of the year he had succeeded in driving the French from Spain and was able to cross the Pyrenees and take up the attack within the frontiers of France.

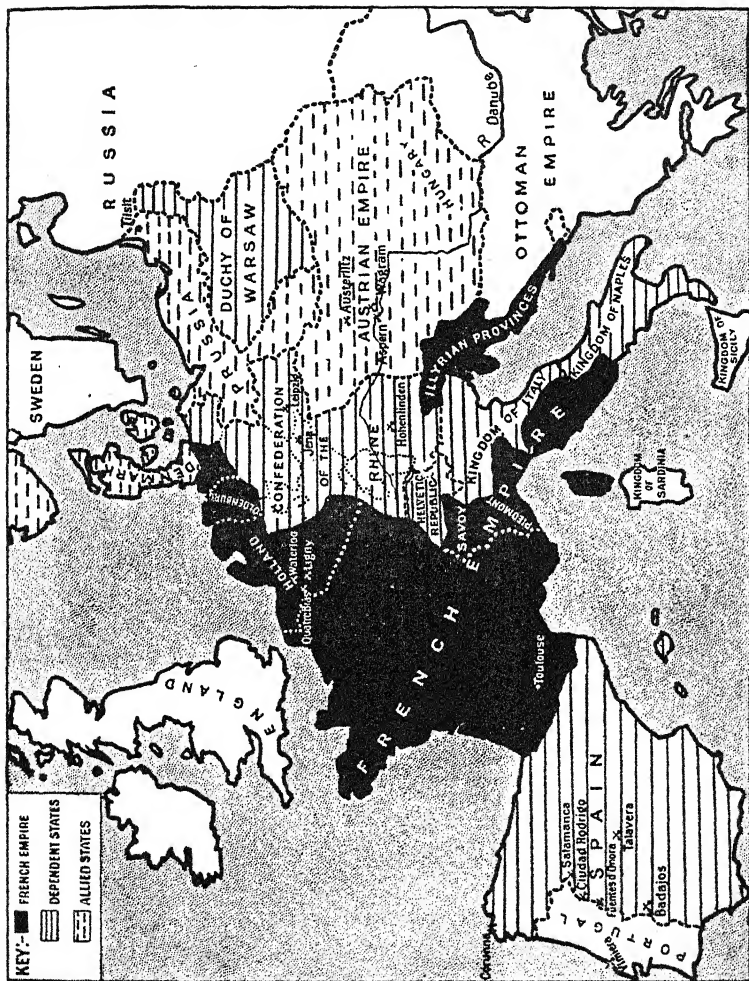
Austria re-enters the War and is again defeated

In 1809, Austria had again been goaded into hostilities: Napoleon was checked at Aspern but crushed the Austrians at Wagram and imposed the Treaty of Vienna upon them. Austria was compelled to make further large concessions to Napoleon, to Bavaria and to Russia. She now was bitterly hostile to her former ally, Russia, and was resolved to abide by the peace she had made. In the next year Napoleon divorced his wife, the Empress Josephine, and married the Archduchess Marie Louise. Not until the end of 1813 was Austria again willing to take any step against Napoleon, and even then distrust of both Russia and Prussia made her assistance to the allies ineffective.

The causes of Napoleon's overthrow

1. His ambition and his territorial aggression,

Napoleon's overthrow had for a long time been becoming inevitable. In 1810 he was at the height of his power, by 1814 he was an exile. His career had been one of continuously expanding ambition, unrestrained by the rights either of nations or of peoples. The early successes of Revolutionary France were followed by the establishment of a number of republics. There were the Batavian, the Ligurian, the Cisalpine, the Cispadane, the Helvetic and the Roman republics replacing the states of Holland, Genoa, Lombardy, the district of Modena, Switzerland, and the Papal States respectively. After Bonaparte had become Consul, however, new conquests, such as Piedmont and Tuscany, were annexed to France, and those republics were made subservient to him. Then when Napoleon became Emperor, dependent kingdoms were created either for him or for members of his family. He himself became King of Rome, his brother, Louis, became King of Holland; his brother, Joseph, was made King of Naples; and in 1808 his brother, Jerome, was created King of Westphalia. The transference of Joseph to Spain was



EUROPE IN 1812



followed by the installation of Napoleon's general, Murat, in the kingdom of Naples. In 1809 the Papal States were annexed to the French Empire, the Pope having been already transported with considerable indignity to Savona. In 1810 the kingdom of Holland was taken from Louis and annexed to France. Thus the territories surrounding France had been subjected to frequent changes and interference for the satisfaction of Napoleon's wishes. Their peoples were not consulted, though Napoleon's beneficent and orderly administration removed much of the dissatisfaction his arbitrariness might have caused.

The lot of subject countries was hard, for Napoleon expected to make the burden of his wars fall as little as possible on France. Conquered countries were forced to contribute heavily in men, money, military supplies and provisions. Of the 680,000 men in Napoleon's Grand Army of 1812 rather less than half were French, the rest being Italian, Polish, Rhenish, Austrian and Prussian<sup>1</sup>. In 1798 the Cisalpine Republic was compelled to support 25,000 French and 22,000 Cisalpine troops and to contribute to the war loan<sup>2</sup>. In 1801 a further burden of 100,000 francs was imposed on it and at the same time, throughout the north of Italy, French troops were quartered on the population, heavy levies were exacted and the property of the clergy was sold<sup>3</sup>. The Italian Republic paid one-third of its revenues to France, and out of a budget of 90,000,000 francs, 4,000,000 were spent on the maintenance of the French army and 22,500,000 on that of the Italian army<sup>4</sup>. Naples also had to make a war contribution of 30,000,000 francs to Napoleon<sup>5</sup>. The Batavian Republic was forced to maintain 25,000 troops and to contribute 65,000,000 francs in 1803. Holland, in addition to supporting a French army of occupation, was forced to provide 16,000 men, ten ships, and transport vessels for 60,000 men<sup>6</sup>. For the campaign of 1806 against Prussia, the South German States were forced to contribute 30,000 men, and after the Battle of

<sup>2</sup> The burdens inflicted upon conquered countries

<sup>1</sup> *Camb. Mod. Hist.*, vol. ix, p. 488

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. viii, p. 639

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. ix, p. 82

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 393

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 404

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 90 and 91



Jena, Prussia was compelled to pay an indemnity of 100,000,000 francs, and war contributions of 160,000,000 francs were forced on the North German States.<sup>1</sup> The total exactions of France from Prussia have been reckoned at 501,227,000 francs,<sup>2</sup> and by the Treaty of Tilsit the rule of Prussia was restricted to four provinces with a population of only 4,500,000 people, she was burdened with a war debt of £720,000,000 and her army was limited to 42,000<sup>3</sup>

and on  
France;

Even so France had to provide 2,613,000 men for Napoleon's army between 1800 and 1813,<sup>4</sup> and by 1814 she had become unable to continue the struggle. By 1797 her credit stood so low that her 5 per cent *rentes* sold at 20, whilst English 3 per cent Consols were selling at 49.<sup>5</sup> Though Napoleon's reforms had done much to remedy the finances, so that by 1807 her stock sold at £93 per £100, by 1814 it sold at only £45.<sup>6</sup> By 1810 Napoleon had been obliged to introduce a policy of the strictest economy even into his own army. French trade had been ruined. "Marseilles was a city of the dead. the streets of Bordeaux were no longer lighted at night at Calais the arrival of a ship was so rare an occurrence that crowds poured out to witness it."<sup>7</sup> Since the renewal of the war in 1803 French trade, export and import, had steadily declined, until by 1814 its total was valued at only 585,000,000 francs (about £25,000,000).<sup>8</sup> In 1812, loans amounting to 12,000,000 francs had to be made to French manufacturers, and Paris, with a population of just over half a million inhabitants, had 20,000 unemployed.<sup>9</sup>

3 The Con-  
tinental  
System,

Few burdens bore more heavily on European countries than the Continental System. In his attempt to secure its enforcement, Napoleon had to embark upon the Peninsular War and the Russian campaign, whilst its establishment considerably stimulated English, Prussian and Austrian opposition. The policy was suicidal for France, for even in peace time half her trade was done in neutral ships, and in time of war she was entirely dependent on neutral shipping. The hardship inflicted upon continental countries was

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 275, 278, and 279    <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 325    <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 509  
<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 114    <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. viii, p. 486    <sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. ix, p. 114.  
<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. viii, p. 486    <sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. ix, p. 124    <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 142.

tremendous in the harbour of Hamburg 300 ships lay dismantled, and of 428 sugar refineries, only one was able to keep at work. The Baltic Powers lost their valuable imports from the English colonies and the markets for their chief exports, which were too bulky to be easily smuggled.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the burden of the Continental System fell directly on the peoples of Europe, for instance, the price of coffee in Europe was ten times that in England. "The interests of consumers all over Europe were enlisted against the authority of the Continental System"<sup>2</sup> In Europe prices were high and goods were scarce, whilst English merchants took the risks of illegal trade in order to make large profits, and all these hardships Europe had to endure for the benefit of a foreign conqueror.

Little wonder that the Continental System largely contributed to the rising of nationalism against Napoleon. Whereas in the earlier stages of the war he had fought merely with decadent Governments, after 1808 he had to contend with embittered nations. Nationalism first arose in Spain: then there was a premature national rising in Austria which, having justified itself at Aspern, was crushed at Wagram: there followed the national resistance of Russia, the uprising of the people of Prussia stimulated by Fichte's *Addresses to the German People* (1807) and the widespread European resistance which led up to the War of Liberation.

The rebirth of nationalism was the prelude to general military and social reorganisation. In 1807 Frederick William III of Prussia called to power Stein, who carried through measures to abolish serfdom, the caste system, and the feudal privileges of the nobility, and Scharnhorst, who effectively reformed the Prussian army. After he had been dismissed by Napoleon's orders in 1808, Stein retired to Austria, until he was summoned to assist Russia in her opposition to Napoleon.

Finally, the most fundamental blunder of Napoleon's

4 The birth of nationalism,

5 The reorganisation of the allied countries,

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 378. The amount of timber imported by England from the Baltic, 1788-92, formed 99 per cent, but in 1808-12 only 38 per cent of the total (Knowles, *Econ. Decl. of Overseas Emp.*, vol. II, p. 164).

<sup>2</sup> *Polit. Hist.*, vol. XI, p. 56. See also p. 79.

6 His inability to get command of the sea.

career was his life-long inability to estimate aright the importance of sea-power and the resources of England. The Revolution had broken up the powerful navy of monarchic France and a new fleet could not be built in a year or so. Napoleon thought in terms of land warfare: he conceived of the English Channel merely as a broad river to be crossed quickly by a gigantic army. Even his invasion scheme of 1804 was chaotic, his preparations were badly organised and his transports inadequate, not even the army was ready for its crossing. The French navy was always regarded as inferior and subordinate to the army, and consequently ships and their equipment were neglected. So long as the English fleet was intact, English trade could not be destroyed. Napoleon also greatly underestimated the financial strength and stability of "the nation of shopkeepers."

The Russian Campaign, 1812

Napoleon's alliance with Alexander could not last indefinitely. Russia found it almost impossible to suspend all her trade with England, and a breach of the Continental System was therefore inevitable. In 1812, in an attempt to enforce his Continental System, Napoleon embarked on his Russian campaign: an early winter and the policy of the Russians in retiring before him and laying waste the country as they went assisted Napoleon's defeat. He reached Moscow, only to find it deserted and desolate: the retreat was ordered: stragglers were cut off by the hostile population: provisions ran short: the climate and disease took their toll and the retreat became a rout. Napoleon set out with about 680,000 men, but of these 500,000 were lost, together with 150,000 army horses and about 1,000 guns. upwards of 100,000 of the French had been taken prisoners.<sup>1</sup>

The War of Liberation

This was the signal for the general uprising of Europe. Prussia, reorganised and fired with new spirit, declared war in 1813; Wellington was invading France from Spain. England came forward with renewed offers of subsidies, and Castlereagh agreed to pay the allies £10,000,000 for the military expenses of 1814.<sup>2</sup> Napoleon resisted valiantly

<sup>1</sup> *Camb. Mod. Hist.*, vol. ix, pp. 488 and 505.

<sup>2</sup> Morse-Stephens, *Revol. Europe*, p. 324.

even after the defeat of Leipzig. Peace negotiations had already been begun without result when, in March, 1814, Paris was occupied by the allies. Napoleon abdicated and retired to Elba. On March 1, 1815, he returned, took full advantage of the disunion of the allies and of the resentment in France at their conduct and proposals, gathered a large army, and planned an offensive campaign. The Hundred Days of Napoleon's sojourn in France forced the allies temporarily to abandon their differences. Napoleon was defeated at Waterloo in June, 1815, and the final peace was completed. This was considerably more severe to France than the first Peace of Paris had been, for the return of Napoleon had seriously alarmed the allies.

The Hundred Days and the Peace of 1815

England's share in the overthrow of Napoleon was prodigious. After Pitt's death, Fox came into power with Grenville in the Ministry of All the Talents, but he died in the next year, 1807. The attempt of the Ministry to introduce Catholic Emancipation met the fierce opposition of the King and his insistence that they should pledge themselves never again to broach the subject. The refusal to give such a pledge was the cause of the fall of the Administration. Then followed the Administration of Portland, which was overthrown by the quarrel of Canning and Castlereagh in 1809, the Ministry of Perceval which ended with the murder of the leader, and then that of Liverpool which lasted from 1812 until 1827. The deaths of Pitt and Fox were blessings in disguise. The old policy of colonial warfare, supported by isolated raids upon the Continent, the subsidising of weak European coalitions and the abstention from concentrated continental campaigns, continued for a time, but by 1809 a better policy had been adopted.

England's war administrations

England had begun to organise her military forces and to interfere decisively in Europe. The Spanish rising, in addition to being a turning-point in the history of Europe, effected a great change in English policy. "Half-hearted and scurried picnics on the rim of the strategic theatre,"<sup>1</sup> desultory raids and isolated attacks were replaced by a concentrated, direct attack upon the enemy. The appointment

Her war policy

<sup>1</sup> Grant-Robertson, *England under the Hanoverians* p. 413

Canning,

of the Duke of York to be Commander-in-Chief at Home had already contributed to the organisation of the military forces Under the leadership of Portland, Canning went to the Foreign Office Canning, who at Eton and Oxford had won considerable fame for his classical scholarship, had already served Pitt as Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs for three years. His greatest devotion was to his old master: he brought to his Department spirited energy, limitless industry, and to the Government a quick-thinking brain and a ready tongue. His faults were self-conceit and a sneering contempt for the cautious and the tongue-tied A hasty temper made him somewhat unreliable and a difficult colleague, his inability to admit a mistake made him an ungenerous master At the Foreign Office, he made himself responsible for the seizing of the Danish and Portuguese fleets, and he realised the importance of Spain and Portugal in the attack on Napoleon He was liberal-minded to the rising nationalism, and declared: "Any nation of Europe that starts up with a determination to oppose a Power which . . . is the common enemy of all nations, becomes instantly our essential ally."<sup>1</sup> For his colleague at the War Office, Castlereagh, who was not a ready speaker, Canning conceived a marked scorn. he grew restive until his aggressiveness led to an open quarrel, a duel, and the overthrow of the Portland Administration.

Castlereagh,

Castlereagh was at the War Office under Portland from 1807-9 and at the Foreign Office under Liverpool from 1812 until his death ten years later. He was tall and handsome his dress and life were marked by dignified simplicity: he was completely lacking in Canning's fiery spirit, but he possessed a calm and unruffled temper: he was painstaking and systematic in business, and highly religious and charitable in character He was an Irishman by birth, educated at Cambridge, had been Keeper of the Privy Seal, was a firm adherent of Pitt, and the manager of the Bill for Irish Union in 1800 He was a patriot whose sound judgment taught him the folly of isolated raids and the need for facing

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, vol. xi., pp. 886-96. Cited from *Camb. Hist. of Brit For. Policy*, vol. 1, p. 368.

Napoleon with a large force on the Continent. At the War Office his first care was to bring the numbers of the English forces up to a war level, to collect accurate and up-to-date information and to organise his Department so that an army could always be punctually sent wherever the country's foreign policy demanded. He immediately raised 30,000 regulars from the militia and enlisted men quickly for an offensive campaign. The militia was to be responsible for home defence and was also a great recruiting and training ground for the regular army: from 1805 over 100,000 men were drafted from the militia to the army.<sup>1</sup> He also secured the re-appointment of Wellesley, who had been removed on the battlefield of Vimiero in 1808, and he remained to the end his faithful supporter: the great general wrote "If I had been your brother you could not have been more careful of my interests."<sup>2</sup> Later at the Foreign Office he continued his energetic measures: he secured a timely peace with America, he did his utmost to stabilise the European opposition, he had 40,000 more troops raised in 1813, and furnished £10,000,000 to continental Powers: he then went personally to Europe and engineered the Treaty of Chaumont in 1814. It was, in fact, his influence and power which preserved this final Coalition. By the Treaty of Chaumont, England, Russia, Austria and Prussia were bound to an offensive and defensive alliance, each contracting to keep 150,000 men in the field, England, in addition, promised to maintain her fleet and provide £5,000,000 per year for the allies. This made England master of the Coalition, and she was able to see that the allies fulfilled their promises. Castlereagh thus claims a large share of the credit for organising the final effort which crushed Napoleon.

Perceval, Prime Minister from 1809 to 1812, and Liverpool, his War Minister and his successor as Prime Minister, were both capable men, anxious to pursue an energetic policy. Perceval was an able orator and had been Solicitor and Attorney-General: in 1810 the Budget, which he introduced, largely increased the war expenditure and doubled

Perceval and  
Liverpool

<sup>1</sup> Grant-Robertson, *England under the Hanoverians*, p. 452

<sup>2</sup> Fortescue, *British Statesmen of the Great War*, p. 270.

the allowance for the payment of Portuguese troops. Liverpool was the son of Charles Jenkinson, the manager of royal patronage in earlier years. He was a man of wide political experience, with a marked ability for reconciling opponents, and he made it his policy to strengthen the forces and to secure unwavering support for Wellington.

are success-  
ful war  
ministers

Thus the death of Pitt brought to power men who had been his faithful adherents, and who were as blameless and incorruptible as he. Their war policy took advantage of altered European conditions, the opposition of Spain, the birth of nationalism, and the steadily deepening opposition to Napoleon's Continental System. England had at last come to realise that colonial and naval victories without a check on Napoleon's continental conquests would be valueless: the English army had been reorganised and brought up to an adequate strength. At the same time England had found in Wellington a general of first-class ability and indomitable courage.

Wellington,  
the British  
general

Sir Arthur Wellesley, created Viscount Wellington in 1809 and Duke in 1814, was the son of an Irish Peer; he had entered the army, fought in the Netherlands in 1794, and been sent out to India. He rapidly became a great soldier and general, and was placed in charge of the Mahratta War. He returned to England in 1805, but, after a short command in Spain in 1808, was recalled. In 1809 he returned to take charge of the Peninsular War. He saw in the war in Spain an opportunity to weaken the French attack in the east of Europe, and ultimately he hoped Napoleon would be forced either to make peace by the constant drain of the war on his resources or to risk a highly dangerous and distracting campaign in Spain. He believed that "any means which could distress the French in Spain must oblige them to delay for a season the execution of their plans upon Turkey or to withdraw their armies from the north."<sup>1</sup> His policy was so successful that in 1810 it employed 350,000 and in 1811, 300,000 of the best French troops who would otherwise have been free for service in Eastern Europe.

His policy,

character,

Wellington was a man of only average height, spare in

<sup>1</sup> *Dict. of Nat. Biography*, Art. on Wellington.

build; he had a quick, martial step, penetrating grey eyes and a zest for smartness of dress and manner. Under the frigid exterior which won for him the title of the Iron Duke he concealed a kind and generous heart: his habitual self-restraint made him indifferent to amateur criticism, often contemptuous of popular opposition and opinion, and hostile to ostentation and luxury. Yet he was not devoid of feeling; he could be withering in his anger yet magnificent in his generosity. His firm step betokened his unflinching resolution: he had learned to trust himself implicitly and to be somewhat cynically suspicious of his fellows. Consequently, though he was generally respected and admired, he had no friends.

He was a general of outstanding ability. In Spain he laboured under difficulties often unknown to the French commanders. his policy of caution was rarely spectacular, for a retreat often served his purpose better than an open battle. Therefore, bringing few decisive battles to his credit, his policy was never popular, and was all too rarely understood in England. His army was small. he was seriously lacking in cavalry and engineers, in guns and ammunition. The courage and tenacity of the Spaniards will readily be admitted: they formed the backbone of the resistance to France and showed great fortitude in the face of adversity. But they did not make good soldiers. Wellington described them as "children in the art of war"; their discipline was so bad that when Wellington began to enter France, he had to send them back to their own country because of his inability to prevent them plundering the French peasantry. He once said: "I am obliged to be everywhere, and if absent from any operation something goes wrong."<sup>1</sup> Yet the obstacles never daunted him. He made the best possible use of the small English force at his disposal, husbanded his resources at all times, and gradually won the confidence of the Government by his prompt attention to business, his unrelenting discharge of his duty, and his trustworthy statements of facts and requisitions. Wellington realised the possibilities of the Portuguese, and gradually

and military  
ability

<sup>1</sup> *Dict. of Nat. Biography.*



trained them to be a very useful addition to his own forces. His tasks called for unbounded patience, fortitude in the face of checks and complaints, great self-confidence and a laborious application to troublesome details

Wellington showed great ability as a strategist. His policy necessitated, particularly at the start, a just perception of the importance of Lisbon as a base of operations and of the value of the co-operation of the fleet. It needed foresight as well as courage to see that Napoleon's success depended on constant victory, that military defeat for him meant ruin, and that a defensive action in Spain must lead eventually to his overthrow in Central Europe. This strategy therefore demanded extreme coolness of judgment and there Wellington excelled Napoleon, as the latter excelled him in imagination, genius and breadth of vision. Moreover, Wellington was a successful opportunist: he realised almost every advantage that came to him, and he had the ability to seize upon every favourable circumstance as it arose.

The part  
played by  
the British  
fleet

Throughout the whole war, however, nothing contributed more to England's success than her fleet. Even at the start of the war England did not lack ships, though their mobilisation was somewhat tardy, for she had 113 ships of the line, and between 1792 and 1800 there was a further increase of 82 per cent.<sup>1</sup> The sailors, however, were drawn from the lowest class of society by the press-gangs, and there were many legitimate and serious grievances behind the mutinies of 1797. Naval strategy was at first weak: Spithead, the naval base, was a poor harbour, and was 200 miles from Brest, the chief centre of French danger. The fleets wintered in port, becoming crippled by inaction, whilst the blockade of the French fleets in their harbours was so slack and ineffective that Hoche's expedition of 1796, which was beaten off only by storms, actually reached Ireland without so much as seeing the English fleet. But the mutinies were followed by a marked improvement in the conditions of the men and of naval service. Moreover, when Jervis suc-

<sup>1</sup> Mahan, *Influence of Sea Power on French Revol and Emp*, vol. II., p. 404.

ceeded to the command of the fleet in 1800, he reformed naval strategy, the blockade of French ports was rendered effective, small English ships kept constant watch close to the ports just outside the range of French guns, and larger ships were not far away in a position to come into action whenever the front-line ships were engaged. The English ships were kept constantly at sea, single vessels or small groups of vessels being relieved from time to time instead of whole fleets being succeeded by relieving forces from the home port <sup>1</sup>

The effective blockade of the French ports and the enforced division of the French fleet into uselessly small groups removed all real danger. Eventually the blockade was bound to lead to an action with the French fleet. Trafalgar was the final blow to their maritime hopes. Further, the British Navy undertook the task of forcing enemies into neutrality or an alliance. Nelson's actions in the Mediterranean in 1795 and 1796, by cutting off supplies to the French army in northern Italy, protracted Austrian resistance to Napoleon, the withdrawal of our fleet from the Mediterranean, following the alliance of Spain with France, led to the complete victory of Napoleon over the Austrians. The naval victory at the Battle of the Nile finally induced Russia and Austria to join the Second Coalition, and the naval attack on Copenhagen broke up the League of Armed Neutrality. command of the sea enabled Great Britain to seize the Danish fleet in 1807 and to take into her service that of Portugal. It was her navy, therefore, which constantly stood between her and Napoleon, he was invincible on land, but she was equally invincible at sea.

And so there arose an impasse; before 1808 neither England nor France could claim any real advantage against the other. Napoleon's invasion scheme of 1803 was therefore sound in conception: it was an attempt to end the war by a major attack on England. But his scheme failed, and he was bound to take the only course open to him, to try attacking England's commerce. Thus English naval supremacy forced Napoleon

in blockad-  
ing the  
French fleet  
and in assist-  
ing the allies

British naval  
supremacy  
defeats the  
Continental  
System and  
destroys  
French  
trade

<sup>1</sup> Mahan, *Ibid.*, vol. 1., p. 346

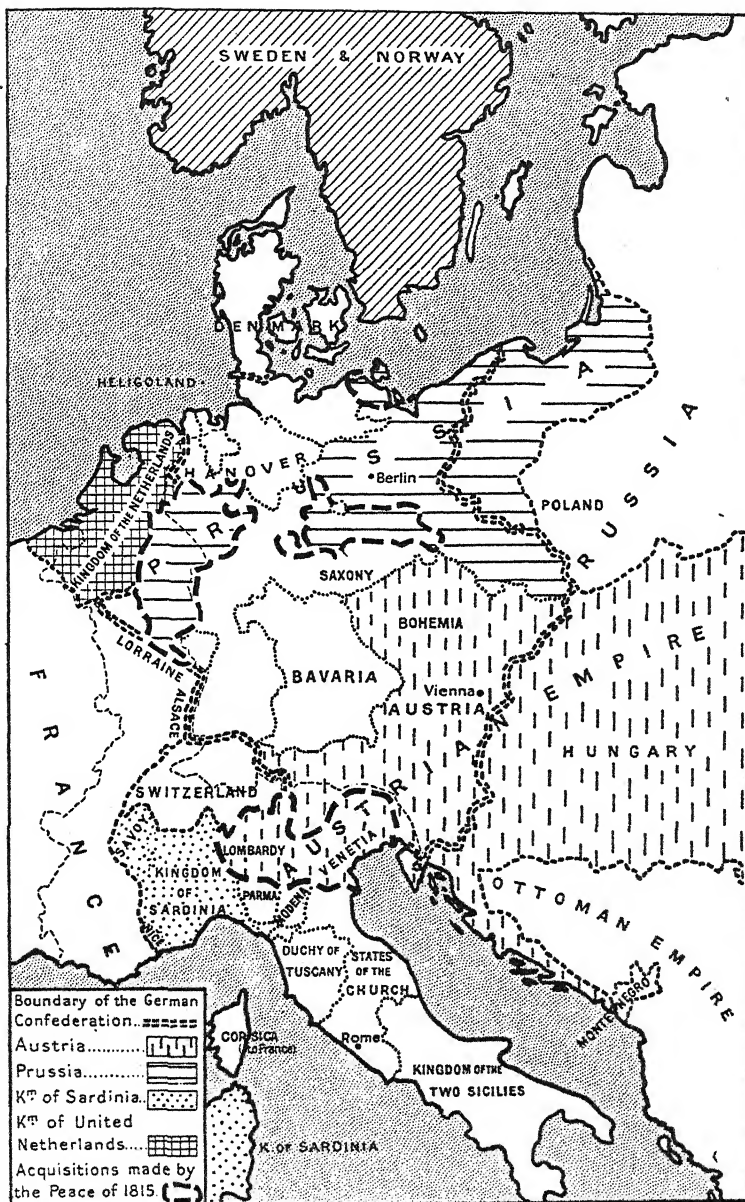
to establish the Continental System and so to compass his own ruin. From the outset one of the duties of the fleet had been to destroy French commerce and to protect English: after the establishment of the Continental System this duty was more necessary than ever. French ocean traffic was actually wiped out, though her coastal business could not be so easily smashed. Britain's fleet made it possible for her to maintain her own trade in spite of restrictions and to watch neutral trading to such an extent that a European opposition to France became inevitable.

The Settlement of Europe.

The overthrow of Napoleon left the Powers of Europe faced with the problems of establishing a lasting peace. France, the aggressor, the cause of over twenty years of European warfare, was generously treated. Louis XVIII, a Bourbon, the brother of Louis XVI, was made King, and Napoleon was banished to St Helena; but France lost no territory other than that which she had acquired at the expense of other Powers in this war: her boundaries were reduced to those of 1792 and she paid an indemnity of 700,000,000 francs. Germany was condemned to a further fifty years of disunion, for Napoleon's work was largely undone by the restoration of thirty-eight states, loosely bound together in a German Confederation, under the leadership of Austria. Prussia regained that part of Poland which she had taken by the first two Partition Treaties, acquired Swedish Pomerania, a part of Saxony and considerable territory on the Rhine. Disunion and backward obscurantism returned to Italy: Austria took Lombardy and Venetia into her Empire: the two Sicilies and Sardinia (to which Genoa was now added) were now restored to their former rulers. In the east, the kingdom of Poland was revived with the Czar as its king. Holland was united with Belgium, and Norway was taken from Denmark and presented to Sweden.

The acquisitions of Great Britain

Great Britain secured Malta, Mauritius, Trinidad, Ceylon, Cape of Good Hope, St Lucia, Tobago and Heligoland, the Ionian Isles, a predominant position in India, and a general promise by the Powers to abolish the slave trade shortly. She had overthrown Napoleon, resisted the crusade of revolutionary France, and had confined her



EUROPE AFTER THE SETTLEMENT OF 1815



within her own boundaries. This implied the security of English commercial interests in the Netherlands and the preservation of her world trade.

The chief criticism of the Peace Treaties would be that they ignored nationalism and sacrificed the welfare of peoples to the ambitions of rulers. The settlement of Germany, Italy, Poland, Belgium and Norway showed too little consideration for the wishes of the inhabitants, the restoration of reactionary governments in Germany, Spain and Italy embittered the liberals. But there were so many rivalries amongst the allies, and the conservative Metternich played so large a part in its proceedings, that little more could be expected of the Congress of Vienna. The Congress has been described as "a clearing-house for settling the accounts of a Coalition"<sup>1</sup>. Further, though the Peace gave rise to half a century of national and liberal revolt, it preserved Europe till the middle of the century from a great war. The balance of power in Europe was temporarily secure, the Peace was therefore a satisfactory solution of past and immediate problems, though it provided with little foresight for those of the future.

The peace neglects nationalism and is reactionary

England's interests were in the hands of Castlereagh. He realised that the most immediate danger came either from a renewed attack from France, provoked by large cessions of territory or a severely repressive government, or from the alarming ambitions of Prussia and Russia. Consequently he insisted on the restoration of the Bourbon monarchy as a buffer against Napoleon, but he also insisted on leaving to France the boundaries of 1792 so that French territorial ambition should not be reawakened. Austria's leadership of the German Confederation and her acquisition of northern Italy were designed to leave her as the chief buffer against Russian and Prussian aggression and as the main guardian of the balance of power in Central Europe. Castlereagh had little sympathy with nationalism, though he had used it largely in the later stages of the struggle against Napoleon. neither did he care for liberalism. He was

Castlereagh's policy at the Peace Congress

<sup>1</sup> E. M. Lloyd reviewing Prof. Temperley's *Canning*, *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, January, 1906, vol. XXI, p. 179.

too clear a disciple of Pitt and too deeply conscious of the dangers with which England had just grappled to tamper with forces whose final influence he could not measure. Hence, for the defects of the Peace Treaties, Castlereagh must be held largely responsible: and yet the Peace provided a practical settlement of immediate problems.

The cost of  
the war

The cost of the war to England was enormous. Her National Debt rose from £238,000,000 in 1792 to £574,000,000 in 1801, and to £861,000,000 in 1815. In 1815 the interest on the Debt amounted to £32,645,681.<sup>1</sup> The steady increase of national expenditure was reflected in the rapidly increasing taxation. The war in 1794 necessitated a loan of £11,000,000 and £913,000 in extra taxes; the black year of 1797 added £7,000,000 to the Budget in 1798 an Income Tax was introduced of 2s in the £ on incomes of £200 and over, and of graduated amounts on incomes of from £60 to £200.<sup>2</sup> In 1814 taxation reached its maximum figure of £74,000,000.

Distress in  
England.

There was in the country very great economic distress from time to time. There was naturally a general rise in prices owing to wartime interference with trade and the increased danger to shipping. The suspension of cash payments by the Bank in 1797 continued until 1819: this was accompanied by the issue of paper money, not merely by the Bank of England, but by the numerous country banks as well, and this produced a certain amount of inflation. During the course of the war over 8,000 British ships were lost, 3,466 between 1793 and 1800, and 4,800 between 1803 and 1814.<sup>3</sup> Nowhere was the effect of high prices more marked than on the feeding of the people. Up to the eve of the war England's wheat supply had been sufficient to enable her to export considerable amounts: the Corn Laws of William III's reign had been revised in 1773 and 1791 so that in years of plenty, when the price fell below 44s.

<sup>1</sup> Hunt, *Polit. Hist.*, vol. x, p. 346. Brodrick and Fotheringham, *Polit. Hist.*, vol. xi, p. 171.

<sup>2</sup> *Polit. Hist.*, vol. x, pp. 348-400

<sup>3</sup> *Camb. Mod. Hist.*, vol. viii, p. 485, and vol. ix., p. 242

per quarter, a bounty of 5s per quarter was paid on export; on the other hand, export was forbidden when it sold for 44s per quarter, and import was allowed on easy terms when the price reached 54s per quarter. But 1792 was the last year in which England was able to export any appreciable quantity, and, as the war continued, importation became more and more necessary. Bad harvests were followed by bread riots in 1795, and the appointment of a Committee of Enquiry by Pitt. In 1800 the price rose to 106s per quarter and the use of corn in distillery and the manufacture of starch was prohibited. Prices were lower from 1802 to 1808, falling to as little as 51s in 1803, but by 1810 they had risen sharply to 116s per quarter. Two years later wheat sold at 130s, only to fall to 75s in 1813, a year of plenty. In that year the importation of corn when the price was less than 103s per quarter was forbidden, exportation was allowed when it sold at 90s. These were, moreover, times of financial stress, and in 1810 there were 237 bankruptcies, three times the normal number,<sup>1</sup> and in 1812 the cost of poor relief amounted to £6,500,000.<sup>2</sup>

The Continental System inflicted great hardship on England, Napoleon's Decrees and Great Britain's retaliatory measures both contributing to her injury. British exports fell from nearly £41,000,000 in 1806 to £37,250,000 in 1808,<sup>3</sup> and the shipping cleared in English ports during the same time from 2,054,000 tons to 1,654,000 tons.<sup>4</sup> The outlook for England would have been serious in the extreme had not Napoleon's attack on Spain opportunely opened the markets of Spanish South America to her. This piece of fortune raised exports in 1809 to nearly £47,500,000, and in 1810 to £48,500,000,<sup>5</sup> and the amount of shipping cleared to 2,230,000 tons and 2,762,000 tons respectively.<sup>6</sup> The tendency to exploit this new market excessively produced a surfeit there and a consequent reaction in 1811.

The effect of  
the Continental  
System

<sup>1</sup> *Camb Mod Hist*, vol ix, p 372

<sup>2</sup> Grant-Robertson, *Eng under the Hanoverians*, p 453.

<sup>3</sup> Rose, *Napoleonic Studies*, p 193

<sup>4</sup> *Camb Mod Hist*, vol ix, p 241

<sup>5</sup> Rose, *Napoleonic Studies*, p 193

<sup>6</sup> *Camb Mod Hist*, vol. ix, p 241



The Continental System necessarily enhanced prices, which reflected the increasing dangers of shipping "The price of Memel timber, which had been 78s a load in 1802, rose in 1809 to 320s a load"<sup>1</sup> Silk rose in price from 30s to 112s per lb, and there was a corresponding increase of the cost of other raw materials. Further, although Napoleon did not intend the Continental System to cut off England's food supply, her food supply was reduced, for countries which were prevented from taking her exports could not afford to send her goods she wished to import. Thus, in 1812, when Napoleon was in almost undisputed control of the Baltic, wheat in England sold at almost famine prices, being quoted at 155s. per quarter and 180s. per quarter for best Danzig wheat.<sup>2</sup> The interference with neutral shipping which the Continental System and the Orders in Council produced often damaged British trade. This was particularly evident when, in 1811, the United States enforced its ban on English trade. America in 1806 had taken £12,856,551 of British exports,<sup>3</sup> but she could pay for these only by the proceeds of her trade with Europe, and it was with this trade that the Orders in Council seriously interfered. Whilst, then, the Continental System played a large part in the ruin of Napoleon, it also inflicted considerable damage on English trade and great hardship on the English population.

Yet there is a steady expansion of British trade.

Yet popular distress is not incompatible with national affluence: while the people suffer, the nation's trade balance sheet may be favourable. In the Napoleonic War there was hardship and distress for the English people yet increasing wealth for the country. The constant withdrawal of men for military service and the persistent hostility in Europe, left the Continent more and more dependent on foreign supplies. The war tended naturally to reduce competition with Great Britain's trade, making it difficult for former rivals to continue to dispute her commercial supremacy: and her naval power enabled her to seize the colonial possessions of France and later of Spain and Holland and to turn the

<sup>1</sup> Knowles, *Econ. Devel. of the Overseas Emp.*, vol. ii., p. 152.

<sup>2</sup> Rose, *Napoleonic Studies*, p. 212.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 191.

wealth of their trade into English pockets. As a result, after recovering from the first shock of war and later from the initial damage of the introduction of the Continental System there was a fairly constant expansion of British trade. In 1792 its total volume, import and export, amounted to £44,500,000, but by 1800 the figure had been raised to nearly £74,000,000, an increase of 65 per cent.<sup>1</sup> from which, of course, allowance has to be made for the rise in prices. By 1810 exports alone were worth nearly £48,500,000.<sup>2</sup> The amount of shipping cleared from English ports in 1792 was 1,736,000 tons: the effect of the war was to reduce this considerably, but by 1796 that figure was again reached, and by 1800 had increased to 2,130,000 tons. From then until the end of the war this amount was almost maintained except in 1808: in 1809 the figure was passed, and in 1814 the shipping cleared amounted to 2,446,000 tons. The war had the effect of reducing the shipping of English vessels and increasing that of neutrals, apart from 1802, the year of peace, English shipping did not reach the figure of 1,561,000 tons of 1792 until 1810, whilst neutral shipping showed a steady increase from 175,000 tons in 1792 to 414,000 tons in 1799, to 568,000 tons in 1806, falling rapidly at the first imposition of the Continental System in 1808, rising to 1,138,000 tons in 1810 at the height of that System, and falling again to 571,000 tons in 1814.

England emerged triumphant from the greatest war of her history but her triumph had been dearly bought. For twenty years the energies of the nation had been diverted into the struggle with France. The end of the war, therefore, saw England burdened with a National Debt of £861,000,000, her population had to bear increasing taxation, privation and poverty. More than that all reforms had been suspended and a reign of vicious repression had been maintained. The Industrial Revolution was altering the social and economic constitution of the country, was inflicting considerable distress upon parts of the population, and was

England's  
triumph  
dearly  
bought

<sup>1</sup> Mahan, *Influence of Sea Power on French Revolt and Empire*, p. 299.

<sup>2</sup> Rose, *Napoleonic Studies*, p. 193.

introducing greater inequality between rich and poor. Yet economic and social legislation could receive little attention. Parliamentary Reform was essential, yet this also had to be postponed. And meanwhile public meetings were prohibited, the free expression of opinion was prevented and Radicals were closely watched and persecuted. The pressing problems of Ireland had also to be shelved, with the result that, when they were again tackled, they had become a great deal more dangerous. An intense fear of progressive views and policy had seized the governing classes, so that the war left to the country a heritage of distress and discontent on the one hand and fear and reaction on the other.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE AGRARIAN REVOLUTION

DURING the eighteenth century England's constantly expanding trade provided the margin for industrial and agricultural improvements. Speculation in land, though not new, greatly increased in the eighteenth century. Farming was profitable and the possession of land brought social prestige and authority and in many cases political influence to the "moneyed man." It was a frequent complaint of eighteenth-century writers that business men of the towns were purchasing land and entering the ranks of the landed gentry. But once installed on a country estate the business man applied the energy and principles of commerce to agriculture; he set out to farm his land to its greatest possible advantage, and he was impatient of restrictive customs and routine. Capitalist agriculture existed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, but the importance of capital to farming was greatly increased in the eighteenth.

Expanding trade and more frequent foreign travel established fresh contacts with other countries, and developed a greater readiness to accept new ideas and a greater desire to discard insular and ancient customs. Just as in the seventeenth century Dutch ideas largely influenced the development of English banking, so foreign inventions, such as the Dutch loom, were introduced into industry, and the settlement of French Huguenot artificers improved the British silk industry. France provided models for canal building, and travel in the French vineyards revealed to Tull the value of hoeing.

The development of speculative and practical science also assisted industrial and agricultural changes. The scientific study of chemistry was beginning, the theories of Newton and Boyle were facilitating experiment, and the discoveries

Increasing  
commerce  
leads to land  
speculation

Agricultural  
improvements  
assisted by  
foreign ideas

and scientific  
progress

of the laboratory were turned to the profit of industry. The age "was in the highest degree inventive and practical, and reveals a close alliance between pure science and technical economic progress"<sup>1</sup> Even those who knew little or nothing of science were influenced by the rational spirit which was abroad, they were expecting changes, and their faith in established routine was almost unconsciously weakened

Jethro Tull  
introduces  
drilling

A number of important agricultural discoveries were made Jethro Tull, an Oxford law student and a barrister, settled on a farm at Crowmarsh in 1699 and discovered that by drilling wheat and roots in rows instead of sowing them broadcast the soil could be hoed after sowing as well as being tilled before By 1701 he had invented his drill, and by 1714 he was using a horse-hoe.

Townshend  
develops the  
rotation of  
crops

Townshend, after resigning from Walpole's Government in 1730, returned to his estate at Raynham in Norfolk, and began experiments with the cultivation of turnips and clover, which had been introduced from Flanders in the seventeenth century He was responsible for the adoption of the Norfolk four-course system, sowing cereals, roots and grasses successively, and he proved the value of the rotation of crops

Robert  
Bakewell  
improves  
breeding

Robert Bakewell, a farmer of Dishley, near Loughborough, experimented in the breeding of stock At that time sheep were valued chiefly for their manure and their wool, so that farmers favoured the short-wooled varieties which were "small in frame, active, hardy, able to pick up a living on the scantiest food, patient of hunger"<sup>2</sup> Bakewell's experiments, which began about 1745, resulted in the breeding of horses suitable for farm use, and of sheep and cattle which were valuable chiefly for their meat, being large in frame and capable of reaching maturity quickly. In particular, he was successful in developing the New Leicester breed of sheep.<sup>3</sup>

The work of disseminating the ideas of progressive farm-

<sup>1</sup> T H Marshall, "Jethro Tull and the 'New Husbandry' of the Eighteenth Century," *Econ Hist Rev*, vol II (1929-30), p. 59

<sup>2</sup> Ernlc, *English Farming Past and Present*, p. 177

<sup>3</sup> Bakewell is an interesting character He was "a tall, broad-shouldered, stout man of brown-red complexion, clad in a loose brown coat, scarlet waistcoat, leather breeches and top-boots."

ing was undertaken by Arthur Young. Succeeding to his father's estate at Bradfield, Suffolk, he twice failed as a practical farmer. Having been educated for a literary career, he began a series of tours of the country in 1767 and collected much information. In 1784 he published the first of the *Annals of Agriculture*, and in 1793 he became Secretary to the newly formed Board of Agriculture, of which Sir John Sinclair was the President. His printed works spread the new ideas, at the Board he collected information and offered advice. He established farmers' clubs and organised ploughing matches, agricultural shows and societies. Broken by the death of his favourite daughter in 1797, he became totally blind in 1811, and died in 1820. He was tall and slim, active and industrious, he had an eager face, keen eyes, and was genial, jocular and often clownish. He was an enthusiastic adherent of progressive farming, and as a result of his labours the new methods were popularised.

Arthur Young popularises the new agricultural ideas,

The accession of George III gave a fresh impetus to progress. The King established a model farm at Windsor, introduced a stock of Merino sheep and set the fashion for aristocratic interest in agriculture and stock-breeding. Nobles, such as the Duke of Bedford and Lord Egremont, established up-to-date farms, and the collecting of herds of cattle became the fashionable hobby of the wealthy. New crops were introduced, improved ploughs were used, the threshing machine was invented in 1784, and patents were taken out for drills, reaping, mowing, hay-making and winnowing machines. The Bath and West of England Society was founded in 1777, the Farmers' Club in 1793 and the Smithfield Club in 1798. In 1803 Humphry Davy began to lecture to the Board of Agriculture on the connection between chemistry and agriculture. He became Professor of Chemistry to the Board and published his *Elements of Agricultural Chemistry* in 1813.

which are stimulated by the fashion set by George III

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His farm became popular amongst sightseers, and his hall is said to have been decorated with 'the skeletons of his most celebrated animals, from the walls hung joints preserved in pickle' (Erele, *op cit*, p. 184).

The new ideas are adopted slowly,

Yet it was long before the improved methods of farming passed into general use. Townshend's ideas were not followed even in his own county until the end of the century: though clover was introduced in Northumberland in 1752 it was rare until 1797, and the milking of ewes continued till 1794,<sup>1</sup> in the Vale of Aylesbury ploughing two to four inches deep was still the rule in 1770.<sup>2</sup> Arthur Young declared that if improvements were suggested to a farmer in Buckinghamshire, "he laughs at you for a theorist."<sup>3</sup>

because

(1) The farmers were conservative

(2) The inventors were secretive,

and often immoderate in their claims

There were many reasons for this slow adoption of the new improvements. The farmers were naturally cautious and conservative: outside Norfolk, for example, they classed turnips with rats as Hanoverian innovations.<sup>4</sup> The inventor was often jealous of his secrets and the profits he hoped to make from them.<sup>5</sup> Nor were the inventors always wise. For instance, Tull greatly overrated the importance of hoeing and denied the value of manure except in that it helped to divide the soil. He simply aimed at the "continuous growth of the same crop without manure or fallow by means of the drill and the horse-hoe." His revolt against broadcast sowing was so complete that he advocated sowing three pecks of wheat seed per acre, where the modern farmer uses about 2½ bushels, and he advised the sowing of turnip seed at the rate of 3 or 4 oz. to the acre. Most of the theories he put forward were false, retrograde, and could be disproved by his contemporaries. He provoked a violent quarrel between the advocates of the New Husbandry and those of the Old, and the farmer scarcely knew which to believe.<sup>6</sup> The improved methods could certainly not be

<sup>1</sup> Ernle, *op cit.*, p. 202

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 198.

<sup>3</sup> Lipson, *Economic History of England*, vol. II, p. 373.

<sup>4</sup> Ernle, p. 175.

<sup>5</sup> Bakewell is said to have infected his cattle with "rot" before selling them to the butcher so that they should not be used for breeding.

<sup>6</sup> See *Econ. Hist. Rev.*, vol. II (1929-30), "Jethro Tull and the 'New Husbandry' of the Eighteenth Century," (T. H. Marshall). The attitude of the farmer is there indicated (p. 57): "Unquestionably a field of Tullian wheat in ear, with the ridges straight and clean, is the most beautiful thing in the vegetable world." So thought

applied universally with uniform profit the methods of Tull and Townshend were particularly suited to their districts, and would not have brought corresponding advantages in others. The new implements were costly and often difficult to obtain, and the new methods required capital. The cost of draining land was reckoned at £3 per acre, and that of managing an up-to-date farm at £5 per acre per annum. Since many of the farmers, outside Norfolk, had only short leases, often for a year, voidable on either side at six months' notice, or held land by copyhold of inheritance with arbitrary fine or copyhold for life,<sup>1</sup> they were not prepared to pay for improvements from which their landlords would reap the benefit. Communications also were bad, farmers often worked only for subsistence or for a purely local market, and hence news of improvement reached them very slowly and did not attract them greatly when it came.

(3) The new methods were not universally applicable

(4) and were costly

(5) Short leases and uncertain copyholds discourage improvements

(6) Communications are bad

The common-field system was perhaps one of the greatest obstacles to improvement.<sup>2</sup> Yet, on the one hand, the common field, though an obstacle, was not an insuperable obstacle to improvement and, on the other hand, enclosure frequently took place without an improvement of farming or breeding. Arthur Young noticed that the improvements which the Buckingham farmer refused as innovations had been practised by the farmer of Kent for a century. Some villages in the seventeenth century had agreed to the introduction of clover and turnips. On the other hand,

The common-field system an obstacle to progress, but enclosure did not necessarily promote progress

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Cobbett. To the average eighteenth-century farmer it looked like a madman's prank. On a space of six feet were three, perhaps only two, rows of thinly-sown corn. What a senseless waste of good land! He was abused for letting a third or a quarter of his land lie fallow every year. But here, as you might say, at least half the land was fallow all the time, only mixed with the crops instead of separate. And this was exactly what Tullians did say, quite frankly, when describing the system.

<sup>1</sup> Copyhold is tenure of a holding according to the custom of the manor, the manorial court roll is the evidence of the tenant's title, and he possesses a "copy" of the appropriate entry on the roll. Those who succeeded to land held by copyhold of inheritance with arbitrary fine had to pay any fine which the lord liked to impose on succession. There was also land held by copyhold of inheritance by fine certain and the fine on succession was then fixed.

<sup>2</sup> For a description of the common-field system, see Lipson, *Economic History of England (Middle Ages)*, ch. 11.



Devon, though totally enclosed, was described by Marshall towards the end of the eighteenth century as "agriculturally the most benighted district of England"<sup>1</sup> "The owner or occupier of an enclosed farm may have been a 'big' man, a capitalist, but he was not necessarily a good farmer". Open-fields set a limit to progress. It does not follow that enclosure made progress certain"<sup>2</sup>

Enclosure  
was not a  
new move-  
ment,

The enclosure movement had been in progress at least from the thirteenth century. Enclosures, numerous in the first half of the sixteenth century, became rather less frequent from the accession of Elizabeth to the Restoration, when they again became more frequent. The total area enclosed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries has been reckoned at 744,000 acres (2.1 per cent of the total area of England or 4.2 per cent. of the cultivated area.)<sup>3</sup> But in addition to these enclosures, which were very limited in extent, a very large part of England "either never passed through the common-field system or was enclosed before 1700"<sup>4</sup> A good deal of land in the counties along the border of Wales, in Shropshire, Hereford and perhaps Staffordshire, was never under the common-field system. A great deal of land in the north of England in Westmorland, Northumberland and Cumberland, and in the extreme south-west, in Cornwall and Devon, was probably brought into separate cultivation from the wild. In Kent, Essex, and Surrey in the south-east, in Lancashire and Cheshire in the north, and in parts of Somerset and Gloucestershire, extensive enclosure had taken place before 1700.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ernle, p 204

<sup>2</sup> *Econ Hist. Rev.*, vol. II, p 60

<sup>3</sup> Johnson, *Disappearance of the Small Landowner*, p 90. Gregory King in 1688 estimated the cultivated area of England and Wales at 21,000,000 acres (11,000,000 arable and 10,000,000 pasture, Ernle, *op cit*, p 145). As he estimated the acreage of England and Wales at 39,000,000 acres (an excess of nearly 2,000,000 acres), a correction has to be made, and also allowance has to be made for his inclusion of Wales. We may roughly estimate the cultivated area of England as 17,500,000 acres. The wastage of cultivable land may be gathered from the fact that the maximum area of land cultivated in England was 25,113,343 acres in 1891. (This figure was kindly supplied by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries)

<sup>4</sup> Slater, *English Peasantry and Enclosure of Common Fields*, p 74.

<sup>5</sup> See Gonner, *Common Land and Enclosure*, pp 215-238 *seq* and 397; Ernle, *op cit*, p 228.

Nevertheless, at the beginning of the eighteenth century a great deal of open-field remained. Of the total area of England, slightly over a half was under cultivation, and of this perhaps three-fifths (about 10,500,000 acres) was still open-field. In Nottinghamshire only 10 per cent of the total area of the county had been enclosed,<sup>1</sup> more than half of the county of Northampton was unenclosed,<sup>2</sup> and of Cambridgeshire 89 per cent was unenclosed at the end of the eighteenth century.<sup>3</sup>

but a large part of England was open-field in 1700

In the eighteenth century enclosures increased rapidly. There were two methods adopted, enclosure by agreement, and enclosure by Act of Parliament. There can be little doubt that both methods were used at the same time, though enclosure by Act became very much more common after 1760. Enclosure by agreement had been the usual method in the seventeenth century, and agreements were frequently ratified by the Court of Chancery or the Court of Exchequer. But it was often difficult, except where one landowner held the majority of the land, to secure agreement amongst the proprietors, and enclosure by Act was often an easier method, since Parliament represented the landed class and was generally favourable to enclosure. Only 208 Enclosure Acts were passed between 1700 and 1760,<sup>4</sup> but 1,355 were passed between 1760 and 1793, and 1,934 between 1793 and 1815.<sup>5</sup> In 1801 the first General Enclosure Act was passed, but this only simplified and cheapened the procedure, and it was still necessary to obtain a particular Act for each enclosure.

Two methods of enclosure by agreement and by Act

Between 1700 and 1815 enclosure by Act added about 5,500,000 acres to the enclosed fields, which represented about 17 per cent of the total area of England<sup>6</sup> and affected about a third of the parishes.<sup>7</sup> Of the amount of land enclosed by agreement there is no available record. "A large part of England was undoubtedly being enclosed otherwise than by Act of Parliament simultaneously with

The amount of land enclosed

<sup>1</sup> Chan bers, *Nottinghamshire in the Eighteenth Century*, p. 149

<sup>2</sup> Lipson, *op cit*, p. 413

<sup>4</sup> Johnson, *op cit*, p. 90

<sup>6</sup> Johnson, *op cit*, p. 90

<sup>3</sup> Ernle, *op cit*, p. 242

<sup>5</sup> Ernle, *op cit*, p. 215

<sup>7</sup> Slater *op cit*, p. 115

the progress of Parliamentary enclosure,"<sup>1</sup> and enclosure by agreement "forms an appreciable addition to that dealt with by Act"<sup>2</sup> The total area enclosed by agreement during the eighteenth century has been reckoned at 8,000,000 acres<sup>3</sup> By 1815 the waste area of England was considerably reduced, most of the cultivated land was enclosed and the enclosing movement was rapidly declining<sup>4</sup> By 1874 only 264,000 acres of common-field remained<sup>5</sup>

and the  
area  
affected.

The enclosures of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries affected mainly the same area, and took place "on a belt of land narrow in the south-west and broad in the east and north-east, extending from Somerset and Dorset, through the Midlands and North Midlands to East Yorkshire, Lincoln and Norfolk at the wider end"<sup>6</sup> Of the Enclosure Acts between 1700 and 1815, 1,141 were concerned with waste only and brought over 1,500,000 acres into cultivation the other Acts effected the enclosure of about 4,000,000 acres of common-field with some waste Enclosure of the common by Act was dominant in the eighteenth century but was decreasing after 1801; enclosure of the waste was increasing less rapidly in the eighteenth century, but became very frequent between 1801 and 1815<sup>7</sup> To what extent enclosure by agreement affected the common and the waste respectively is not known

The motives  
of enclosure

The motives for enclosure varied greatly from decade to decade and from district to district. The disadvantages of the open-field system with its "long, narrow, winding or

<sup>1</sup> Slater, *op cit*, p. 74

<sup>2</sup> Gonner, *op cit*, p. 53 In a footnote Professor Gonner suggests that "some such addition as 3 to 5 per cent of the area enclosed after 1750 might be made"—i.e., not more than about 260,000 acres This is very small compared with Dr Slater's estimate

In Nottinghamshire, whilst 133,000 acres were enclosed in the eighteenth century by Act, 220,000 acres were enclosed otherwise (Chambers, *op cit*, p. 149), in Bedfordshire between 1742 and 1793 more was enclosed without an Act than with one, enclosure by agreement was considerable in Northants (Slater, *op cit*, p. 194), and about 30 per cent. of Berkshire was enclosed without an Act as late as the period after 1793 (*ibid*, p. 238)

<sup>3</sup> Dr Slater in the *Sociological Review*, January, 1912, p. 64

<sup>4</sup> See Johnson, *op cit*, p. 90

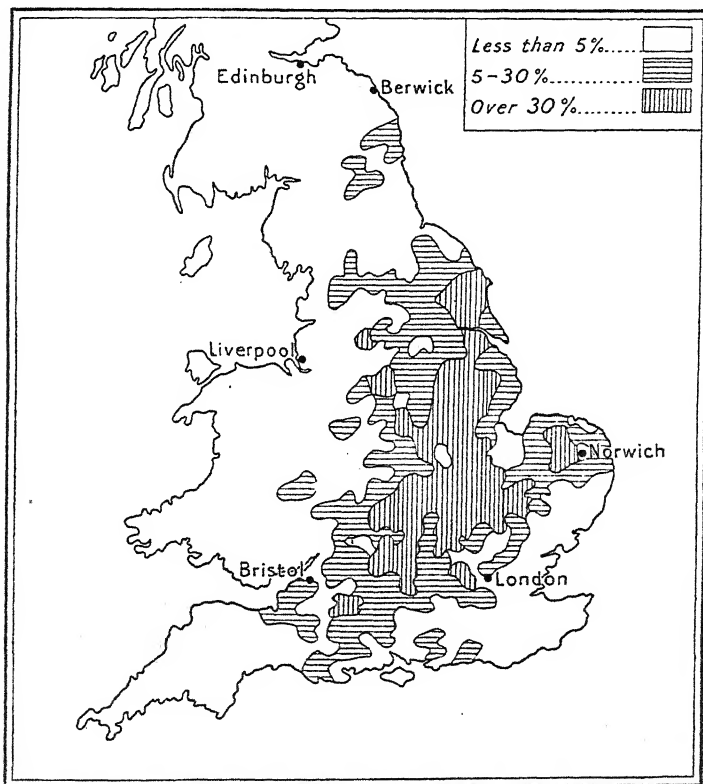
<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, p. 94 n

<sup>6</sup> Gonner, p. 123

<sup>7</sup> Johnson, *op. cit*, p. 90, and Slater, *op. cit*, App A, p. 266.

worm-like strips"<sup>1</sup> are now obvious. A landlord owning 200 acres might have his strips of land in ten or twenty places, perhaps two miles apart.<sup>2</sup> A large part of his time was spent in going from one to the other, and large-scale farming was impossible. It was highly inconvenient "to

(1) To remove the disadvantages of the open-field system;



ENCLOSURE OF COMMON-FIELD BY ACT IN THE EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURIES

Based on Gonner's *Common Land and Inclosure* (Macmillan).

set your pace by the slow bucolic temperament of small farmers, nursed in a simple and old-fashioned routine."<sup>3</sup> Extensive improvement could only be introduced by common

<sup>1</sup> Hammond, *Village Labourer*, p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> The arable field at Wantage was 2 miles wide (Gonner, *op. cit.*, p. 23).

<sup>3</sup> Hammond, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

consent and throughout the village fields. The fields were opened to pasture between August and February, and the growing of winter crops was impossible. The strips were too narrow for cross-ploughing or cross-harrowing. The commons were overcrowded, often with the cattle of outsiders, quarrels and lawsuits were common, improved breeding was difficult, infection was frequent and adequate feeding was often impossible. There were often a number of squatters on the commons in the most squalid conditions, frequently living lives of idleness and theft.<sup>1</sup>

(2) to accommodate the capitalist;

(3) to introduce improved methods,

(4) to increase rents

(5) and tithes

The capitalist, ready to invest money in land, favoured large-scale farming and would purchase or rent holdings or enclose the waste: he would certainly not be bound by common rights or customs. If the improved farming methods were to be adopted, enclosure and consolidation were necessary, and when adopted they tended to increase the enclosing (for the use of winter crops made it possible to keep sheep and cattle alive through the winter), farmers carried larger stocks, had a greater supply of manure and so grew better crops. Many farmers were induced to undertake the expense of enclosure by the prospect of increased returns, as much as forty-five years' purchase was offered for land, rents rose accordingly and the consequent speculation in land encouraged consolidation and enclosure.<sup>2</sup> The consolidation of holdings facilitated the collection of rents and reduced the cost of management, so that the net produce of enclosed farms increased much more than their gross produce. When tithe-owners discovered that enclosed land was more productive than unenclosed they also became favourable to the movement. Once the capitalist farmer had entered agriculture, the rule of custom was overthrown and obstacles to further enclosing withdrawn. Even in the seventeenth century manorial uniformity was rapidly breaking down, and by the eighteenth century there was

<sup>1</sup> A writer in 1794 stated the cottagers were "accustomed to rely on a precarious or vagabond existence from the land in a state of nature, when that fails they take to pilfering and poaching" (Johnson, *op cit*, p. 97). This was not always the case, for a very prosperous colony of squatters existed at Blofield in Norfolk (Hasbach, *Hist of Eng Agric Labourer*, p. 78).

<sup>2</sup> Ernle, *op cit*, p. 322

no such thing as an average tenement, holdings varied greatly in size and tenure. Opinion was becoming more favourable to enclosing. England produced an ample supply of corn for her own use, so that the danger of famine if land was enclosed for pasture was much less than formerly. Religious opposition was declining, and the economic advantages of enclosure were more clearly recognised, there was therefore little complaint against enclosures until the end of the eighteenth century, and then it was directed rather against the unfair treatment of the small farmer.

Opinion  
is less  
hostile to  
enclosure  
than  
formerly

But enclosure was not equally profitable throughout the country. The saving effected by large-scale production was not so great nor so general in agriculture as in industry, for in many cases the large farm was little more profitable than the small one. The open-field was less suited to light and sandy soils than to others, and it survived longest on chalk, the region of rich loams near Flegg in Norfolk "could yield little more profit when enclosed than when open"<sup>1</sup> and enclosure there took place late. The dairy-farming districts of Gloucester, Wiltshire and Aylesbury had largely been enclosed before the eighteenth century; the red soils had also been enclosed early chiefly for arable farming, the wide belt of grazing lands in the Midlands were extensively enclosed early in the eighteenth century, the chalk soils of Cambridge, Buckingham and Oxford, the loams of Norfolk and the heavy land on water-bearing stratas were all enclosed late in the eighteenth century or in the nineteenth century when high prices, the growth of population and the development of scientific farming made enclosure profitable.<sup>2</sup>

Amount  
and date  
of enclosure  
largely  
dependent  
on the  
nature of  
the soil

The extension of enclosures was therefore considerably influenced by the fluctuation of prices. Between 1715 and 1765 the price of corn was low, averaging only 34s 11d per quarter, 10s. 9d per quarter less than the average price from 1693 to 1714.<sup>3</sup> The farmer was therefore inclined to enclose in order to reduce the costs of production or to turn his land over to pasture. After 1765 prices rose, owing to

and on the  
fluctuations  
of prices

<sup>1</sup> Gonner, *op cit*, p. 207

<sup>2</sup> Gonner, *op cit*, p. 228

<sup>3</sup> Jonnsen, *op cit*, p. 87

the wars and to the scarcity of corn caused by the reduced gross production of enclosed farms. At the end of the century the rapid increase of population and the great rise in prices, caused by the French war, led to a great deal of enclosure, particularly of the waste, and the adoption of improved methods, particularly near the new industrial towns where the demand for food and the need for economical use of land were pressing.

The Corn  
Laws

Throughout the century a series of Corn Laws were enforced in the interests of the British farmer. The policy of regulating the supply of corn had been taken over by the State from the manorial courts, and the first Corn Law was passed in 1436.<sup>1</sup> In 1670 a law had been passed imposing a prohibitory duty on the import of corn when the price in the home market reached 53s 4d per quarter and a duty of 8s per quarter when the price stood at between 53s 4d and 80s per quarter. Export was allowed freely, except in times of shortage, when the price reached 53s 4d per quarter. In 1689 the customs duty, and in 1699 the subsidy and other duties on export, were removed, in 1689 the bounty which had been paid upon export from 1673 to 1681 was revived. These laws continued unaltered until 1773, but in years of shortage, as in 1698, 1708, 1741, and 1757-9, permission to export and the bounty were withdrawn, and in 1741, 1757, and 1758 import was allowed duty-free. From 1765 England was unable to provide sufficient for her needs, import was increasing and the right to export and the payment of the bounty were almost continuously withdrawn. In 1773 a new law was passed: a prohibitory duty was levied when the price in the home market reached 44s per quarter (instead of 53s 4d), a duty of 17s per quarter was levied when the price ranged from 44s to 48s per quarter, and when corn sold at 48s per quarter, a duty of only 6d. per quarter was levied on import. Export was forbidden as soon as the price reached 44s per quarter. In 1791 the import of corn was facilitated by imposing the duty of 6d. when the price was 54s (instead of 48s.), reducing the duty when prices

<sup>1</sup> For an account of early Corn Laws, see Lipson, *Econ. Hist. of England*, vol. II, ch. III, sect. IV.

ranged from 50s. to 54s. to 2s 6d per quarter, and imposing a prohibitory duty when corn sold at under 50s per quarter. To allow for the rising price of corn, in 1804 the prohibitory duty was made inoperative when corn sold at below 63s and in 1815 when corn sold at below 80s. In 1795-6 and from 1800 to 1814, bounties were placed on importation. In 1814 export of corn was again freed and "corn laws only survived in the one-sided form of restrictions on imports."<sup>1</sup>

The objects of the Corn Laws were plain. Their chief motive was to stabilise prices by excluding foreign corn in years of plenty and by prohibiting export of home supplies in years of scarcity. The interests of the British farmer were secured by the exclusion of foreign competition in years of plenty and by the bounties on export allowed in the earlier part of the century. After 1765 the main object of the Corn Laws was to provide an adequate supply for the nation by facilitating and encouraging import. In ordinary years it is unlikely that the Corn Laws raised prices, for years of scarcity in England were rarely years of plenty in the rest of Europe which enjoyed similar climatic conditions, and from 1689 to 1765 the average price in England was less by 4d per quarter than the average price in Europe.<sup>2</sup> The British farmer was given a secure market rather than high prices.

It is improbable therefore that the Corn Laws did much to stimulate enclosure for tillage. Whether enclosure took place for pasture or for tillage largely depended on the time and the place of the enclosure. In general the rich land was enclosed for pasture and the poorer land for tillage. In the Midlands a great deal of arable land was turned to pasture, so that in 1808 it was estimated that a decrease of 19,000 acres had taken place in the arable land. On the other hand, in the north and the west the area under tillage increased, and in the eastern counties there was a net increase of nearly 3,000 acres devoted to tillage.<sup>3</sup> The enclosures of the earlier part of the century down to 1760 at least were more largely for pasture, not only for the production of wool but of meat, which sold at high prices, for the economy of

and their  
objects

They do not  
stimulate  
enclosure for  
tillage

Whether  
enclosure  
is for arable  
or pasture

depends on  
(a) soil,

<sup>1</sup> Ernle, *op. cit.*, p. 263

<sup>2</sup> Ernle, *op. cit.*, p. 261

<sup>3</sup> Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 99



(b) time of  
enclosure  
and demand  
for supplies

Arable land  
does not  
decrease in  
area

Agricultural  
output  
increases,

management and to give a rest to the land, exhausted by the open-field system. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, when the demand for food was keener, when prices were exceptionally high and when improved methods made it possible to cultivate the poorer soils with profit, enclosure was largely for tillage. Between 1775 and 1786, 485,640 acres were enclosed by Act, of which 255,118 acres were devoted to tillage and 233,522 acres to pasture.<sup>1</sup> Since a large area of waste land had been brought into cultivation it is probable that though the pasture lands were increased greatly by the enclosures, the area of arable field increased also rather than decreased. A Committee of the Commons estimated that the net increase of wheat land effected by the Acts of 1775-1800 amounted to 10,625 acres,<sup>2</sup> and it has been calculated that at least 365,000 acres were added to the wheat land between 1771 and 1808.<sup>3</sup>

As a result of the enclosures the agricultural output of the country greatly increased. The total area under cultivation was extended, the land in general was put to its most profitable use, and it was no longer necessary for every village to have a large area of arable land for subsistence if the land were not suitable. Roots served as fallow crops, and winter cultivation became possible. The number of sheep and cattle also increased. In reply to enquiries sent out by the Board of Agriculture in 1808, of 571 parishes which had been enclosed 354 had more cattle than before enclosure and 106 had less; of 511 parishes 255 had more dairy cows and 143 had less; of 721 parishes 467 had more sheep and 157 had less.<sup>4</sup> At the end of the eighteenth century Norfolk was sending 20,000 cattle and 30,000 sheep to Smithfield Market annually.<sup>5</sup> The weight of cattle also increased owing to improved methods of breeding. The average weight of beeves at Smithfield Market rose from 370 lb in 1710 to 800 lb. in 1795, that of calves from 50 lb to 148 lb, of sheep from 28 lb. to 80 lb., and of lambs from 18 lb. to 50 lb.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gonner, *op. cit.*, p. 348

<sup>2</sup> Ernle, *op. cit.*, p. 266

<sup>3</sup> Ernle, *op. cit.*, p. 194

<sup>4</sup> Ernle, *op. cit.*, p. 188, and Johnson, p. 96 n

<sup>5</sup> Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 99

<sup>6</sup> Gonner, *op. cit.*, p. 348.

The profit of the changes was received largely by the great landowners. They took the bulk of the profits of large-scale farming, and they benefited from the general rise in rents. In the Vale of Evesham rent of common field arable was 10s. to 15s. per acre, that of enclosed arable was 10s. to 20s. per acre and of enclosed pasture was 20s. to 50s. per acre. One parish, which had produced £1,137 rent before enclosure, produced £1,807 afterwards, and the rents of parishes enclosed in Lincolnshire by twenty-three Acts increased by £14,256, or by almost 100 per cent.<sup>1</sup>

and the  
great land-  
owners reap  
the profit

Enclosure was in general opposed to the interests of the poorer class. The petition to Parliament which preceded the passing of an Enclosure Bill was often drawn up in secret by the promoters, until this was forbidden in 1727. The haste with which the Bills were passed by Parliament became proverbial; Parliament represented the class most interested in enclosure, and as it was called upon to pass Enclosure Acts at the rate of fifty a year between 1760 and 1801, besides a multitude of other purely Local Bills, only the most public-spirited members would give a Bill much attention. The canvassing and manipulation of the Parliamentary Committee responsible for the detailed consideration of the Act was not unknown.<sup>2</sup> The local commissioners were sometimes appointed by the promoters before the Bill was introduced, and until 1801 there was no appeal from their decisions. Yet it is improbable that wanton injustice was practised extensively by the commissioners. The cost of promoting an Enclosure Bill and carrying out its provisions was very high: between 1786 and 1799 Parliament received about £120,000 as fees for 707 Enclosure Bills.<sup>3</sup> In addition, the fees of lawyers, surveyors and commissioners had to be paid. Hence the wishes of the poor were unrepresented and often deliberately ignored in the Parliamentary proceedings, and the cost of enclosure often prevented them from getting justice from the commissioners.

Enclosure  
affects the  
poorer  
classes  
adversely,

The small yeomen in particular suffered. Even if they

<sup>1</sup> Slater, *op cit.*, pp 99, 108, 202

<sup>2</sup> Hammond, *op cit.*, p. 58 *seq.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p. 76 *n.*

and inflicts  
great hard-  
ship on the  
small  
yeomen

could afford to pay their share of the costs of the Enclosure Bill, they were often unable to pay those of hedging. If they did survive, their allotment of land was relatively small and they were often therefore not in a position to compete with the larger farmer, particularly if the costs of enclosure<sup>1</sup> had been met by borrowing or the mortgage of their estates. That small landowners were decreasing is clear,<sup>2</sup> many were depressed into the labouring class, some sold their lands and rented larger estates; others, like Fielden, Peel and Arkwright, invested capital in industry. But their decline had begun before the eighteenth century, and was not due entirely to the effects of enclosure. "For some time capitalist farming had been increasing, and with the opportunity for capital, the small owner had experienced increasing difficulty in holding his own."<sup>3</sup> The yeomen class had been seriously weakened by the burden of the land tax, local levies, poor rates and war expenditure which fell to a large extent upon it. After about 1785 there was a tendency for small-holdings to increase in number: the small yeomen retained the allotments they received and, though burdened with debts, farmed them in order to reap the profits of the abnormally high prices.

and on the  
cottagers  
and  
squatters

The cottagers and squatters also suffered from enclosure, though their treatment varied greatly. In some cases they received allotments,<sup>4</sup> but very frequently they could not afford to fence them or farm them profitably. Cottagers frequently could give no legal proof of their rights if they were demanded (and they usually were, except in Norfolk), and the legal position of squatters was very precarious. Particularly serious to these classes was the loss of common.

<sup>1</sup> The total costs of enclosure often amounted to £3 or even £5 per acre. The Board of Agriculture, reviewing a number of Enclosure Acts involving on an average 1,162 acres, found the costs to be £497 for the Act, £259 for surveying and valuation, £344 for the fees of the commissioners and £550 for fencing—Total, £1,650 (Gonner, *op cit*, p. 89).

<sup>2</sup> Johnson, *op. cit*, p. 132 *seq*

<sup>3</sup> Gonner, *op cit*, p. 378

<sup>4</sup> At Great Somerfield, for instance, 5 or 6 acres were allotted to each labourer. In 1796 Thomas Barnard and Wilberforce founded a Society for Bettering the Condition of the Poor. Ernle, however, states that less than 5 per cent of the Acts made provision for the labourer (Ernle, *op. cit.*, p. 301).

rights, and of the right to glean in the fields and to gather fuel from the waste<sup>1</sup> They often found difficulty in buying milk, for the farmers often sold wholesale only, and frequently they were directed to go to the miller instead of to the local farmer for their meal Their position was serious when the French wars brought distress to England, and serious bread riots took place in 1795 Even Arthur Young, great upholder of enclosure though he was, lived to regret the absence of provision for the poor, and the Board of Agriculture admitted that of sixty-eight Acts, fifty-three had injured the poor.<sup>2</sup>

The number of labourers entirely dependent on wages was therefore greatly increased But enclosure also led to a certain amount of unemployment. Where arable land was converted to pasture, less hands were needed, but where improved methods of farming were introduced more labour was necessary. As the total acreage devoted to tillage was increased by enclosure, the amount of unemployment cannot have been serious.<sup>3</sup> A detailed analysis of certain districts has certainly proved that enclosure did not lead to depopulation,<sup>4</sup> yet in other cases depopulation did take place, and was admitted even by the advocates of enclosure<sup>5</sup> There was undoubtedly a considerable amount of unsettlement, temporary unemployment in one place being balanced by increased employment elsewhere Employment would also tend to be more regular on enclosed farms, whereas the small farmer had needed occasional labour, the large farmer needed permanent labourers, and though hedging, ditching and drainage did not employ many extra hands, yet they provided winter occupation for those who were employed

The effect  
of enclosure  
on employ-  
ment

The position of the labourer soon was desperate As

<sup>1</sup> It was said that "several families will gather as much wheat as will serve them for bread the whole year and as many beans as will keep a pig" (Hammond, *op cit*, p 107)

<sup>2</sup> Ernle, *op cit*, p 301

<sup>3</sup> Gonner, *op cit*, p 396 *seq*

<sup>4</sup> Slater, *op cit*, p 99 In 1801 Arthur Young claimed that of 37 enclosed parishes he examined in Norfolk, the population had risen in 24, had fallen in 8 and was stationary in 5 (Ernle, *op cit*, p 216) The Report of 1807 on Gloucestershire claimed that enclosure encouraged an increase of population (Ernle, p 231)

<sup>5</sup> Hasbach, *op cit*, p 131

The  
labourer's  
position  
becomes  
desperate,

prices rose, farmers ceased to pay the labourer in kind, and though wages rose considerably they entirely failed to keep pace with prices. Between 1790 and 1804 wages rose by about 40 per cent., but since 1760 the price of provisions had risen by between 50 and 100 per cent., and in distant parts of the country by several hundreds per cent.<sup>1</sup> Those who studied family budgets found that only about 60 per cent. of the cost of living could be earned by the family.<sup>2</sup> The labourer had either to reduce his standard of living or to seek poor relief. In 1795 a proposal to regulate wages by the price of wheat was considered, and in 1795 and 1800 Bills were introduced to fix a minimum wage, but both were rejected. While wages were failing to keep pace with prices, industry was being transferred to the factory and the family lost its spinning, its weaving and other domestic occupations.

though  
enclosure  
is not  
generally  
responsible  
for a serious  
worsening  
of his  
position

In some ways the labourer was perhaps not much less favourably situated than before the enclosures. While the open-field system remained, employment had been irregular, and though he had a holding of his own, the labourer had to tend it intermittently as opportunity arose. His hours of work had always been long, for he worked from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. in spring and summer, from 5 a.m. to sunset in harvest and from eight till dark in winter. His just share in the commons had often been taken by outsiders, and many of the cottagers and squatters lived under the most squalid conditions.<sup>3</sup>

But he has  
a sense of  
injustice

But though his actual condition was not much worse, the labourer had to face the great unsettlement which temporarily followed enclosure, he was alienated from the soil and he had lost his independence. As he saw the large landowner growing richer, he nursed an understandable sense of injustice, and he was more than ever affected by the fluctuations of wages and prices. Many drifted into the towns to seek employment in the growing industries, and to share the problems of the rapidly expanding towns.

After 1813 the condition of agriculture rapidly became

<sup>1</sup> Hasbach, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

<sup>2</sup> Hasbach, *op. cit.*, p. 144.

<sup>3</sup> For instance in Buckingham, Northampton and elsewhere cow-dung mixed with straw was used as fuel (Ernle, *op. cit.*, p. 198).

serious. The burden of taxation had become intolerable: a Hereford farmer owning 300 acres in 1815 paid rates and taxes amounting to £383.<sup>1</sup> Between the years 1782 and 1792, whilst the price of wheat averaged 47s per quarter, the national expenditure was under £20,000,000, the poor rate was less than £1,750,000 and there was no property tax. Between 1802 and 1812, although wheat averaged 88s. per quarter, national expenditure amounted to £100,000,000, the poor rate totalled £7,000,000, a heavy property tax was levied, tithes had increased by one quarter, wages by two-thirds and the county rate sevenfold.<sup>2</sup> Farming had still shown a profit so long as prices were abnormally high, and prices had been kept high by the currency of large amounts of paper money. But in 1814 prices fell rapidly, corn which had sold at 126s per quarter in 1813, sold at 74s 4d in 1814, and at 65s 7d in 1815. In 1814, 240 banks stopped payment and eighty-nine became bankrupt. The farmers' receipts were £100,000,000 less than in 1812. In 1815, 3,000 acres in Huntingdon were abandoned, writs and executions in Norfolk numbered 636 in 1814 and 844 in 1815; in Suffolk they numbered 430 and 850, and in Worcester 640 and 890. In 1816 the depression began seriously to affect the farmers of grass.<sup>3</sup> It was this post-war depression which brought the injustice of the labourer into prominence. dependent on his wages, already forced to adopt a low standard of living, and having lost the earnings of domestic industry, unemployment and reduced wages made his position desperate.

The plight  
of agricul-  
ture at the  
end of the  
French  
Wars

<sup>1</sup> Hammond, *op cit*, p. 171

<sup>2</sup> £8,000,000 was levied from agricultural occupiers in 1814 (Errle *op. cit*, p. 321)

<sup>3</sup> Errle, *op cit*, pp. 319 and 322

# CHAPTER VIII

## THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION AND ITS RESULTS

Industrial progress

At the same time changes were taking place in industry. Expanding trade made capital available for improvements, and there were no restrictions to prevent capital passing from industry to industry or from class to class. Increasing competition, unwillingness to be dependent on foreign nations for supplies, and the great expansion of the home market caused by the rising prosperity of the commercial classes, stimulated industrial development. Scientific progress assisted this development, the number of patents taken out between 1617 and 1760 already numbered 697, and patents in the eighteenth century were less "mere mechanical dreams" than formerly.<sup>1</sup> The London Society of Arts was founded in 1754, and during the next twenty-eight years spent £28,000 on premiums and medals alone.<sup>2</sup> The Royal Academy of Arts was established in 1768, and the foundation of other societies followed.

and changes had begun by the beginning of the eighteenth century

In the eighteenth century large capital was essential to many of the industries. It was being raised from many sources and was steadily increasing in both amount and importance. Noble landowners were investing the profits of their lands in coal-mining ventures; merchants frequently acquired control of the industry as well as of the distribution of its goods; slave-traders of Bristol invested their wealth in the iron-works of South Wales; weavers saved their profits until they had sufficient to become masters; foremen of cotton mills saved until they could become manufacturers; nailers and blacksmiths, when successful in the hardware industry, invested their capital

Industry already capitalistic.

<sup>1</sup> W. Bowden, *Indust. Soc. in England towards End of the Eighteenth Century*, p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42.

in large-scale iron-works. The iron, copper-mining, brewing and soap industries were all highly capitalised

Production in many industries was already practised on a large scale, the division of labour and the specialisation of trades and individual processes were well advanced. Many processes had become mechanical long before the introduction of machinery, and though much industrial work was carried on in the home of the workers, factories, without machinery, were not unknown<sup>1</sup>. Many workers, though retaining the appearance of independence, were virtually wage-earners only: they worked on material supplied by merchant capitalists, and were paid according to output, sometimes even their tools ceased to be their own. The guild system was losing its importance, and grievances of the employee were frequent before the establishment of the factory. Complaints of long hours, of low wages, of the sharp practices of the employer, of the cleavage between the master and his men, were well known at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Trade unions existed and were adopting methods which became common a century later.

Large-scale  
production  
already  
exists

Industrial changes in the eighteenth century did not take place at a uniform rate in all industries, nor were they by any means complete by 1815. Machinery was adopted slowly, factories did not rapidly become general, and the concentration of population in industrial districts and in industrial towns had begun before the use of machinery and was less intense in 1815 than might be imagined. The problems of the towns were then already serious, but the urgency of these problems was not yet apparent.

Industrial  
changes not  
complete  
by 1815

At the beginning of the eighteenth century the coal industry was already important. Coal was used for domestic purposes, in brewing and distilling, in making bricks and tiles, in the manufacture of glass, nails, hardware and cutlery, and in the smelting and casting of brass. The chief coal-field was near Newcastle, which was the chief port for the coal industry. In 1729, sixty or seventy thousand tons were annually exported to Ireland, but this represented probably

THE COAL  
INDUSTRY.

<sup>1</sup> Jack of Newbury employed 400 weavers in the sixteenth century.



not more than a third of the total trade, which was largely confined to the home market <sup>1</sup> In 1745 Newcastle exported over 500,000 tons to London <sup>2</sup>

Obstacles  
to its  
progress

The chief obstacles to the progress of the mining industry were the danger of flooding and the difficulties of ventilation, transport within the mine and transport from the pit-head to the market Mining usually was on a small scale; pits in the Forest of Dean were often worked by one or two and rarely more than a dozen colliers, in the Midlands, Lancashire and Yorkshire, collieries of 100 men were more common, but even then individual pits were very small, and only five or six men were usually employed on a pit underground In Northumberland, Durham and Cumberland mining, as on a larger scale, the workers in a pit numbering as many as 20, and 500 or 1,000 being employed at a colliery

(1) The  
danger of  
flooding.

The chief difficulty of the colliery owner was that of sinking a shaft and of raising the water to the surface In the first half of the century, many shafts, even in the Midlands, were barely 12 yards deep and rarely more than 60 or 70 yards long In Northumberland and Durham the maximum depth was 400 feet and the average about 200 feet After many previous attempts to make a pump to raise the water of mines, Savery in 1698 and then Newcomen in 1712 devised pumps suitable for general use. But the rent of these was high,<sup>3</sup> until the improvement of the iron trade the pumps were imperfect and they were expensive to use.

Watt's  
steam  
engine

In 1762, Watt, a young man of twenty-seven, an instrument maker to Glasgow University, began his experiments to improve Newcomen's engine, a model of which he had been repairing. By 1765 he had invented the separate condenser, and having borrowed £1,200 from Dr. Black of the University, began to build a steam engine for John Roebuck, the manager of the Carron Ironworks. Soon Roebuck also was in debt, and Watt had to seek assistance from Matthew Boulton, the owner of the Soho Ironworks, near Birmingham. The steam engine was brought to Soho from Kinneil in

<sup>1</sup> Ashton and Sykes, *The Coal Industry in the Eighteenth Century*, p. 228

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 194.

<sup>3</sup> The rent of a Newcomen engine at Whitehaven was £182 and at Griff £300 (Ashton and Sykes, *op. cit.*, p. 38).

1773, was greatly improved by Boulton's men and, with the use of more accurate cylinders supplied by John Wilkinson, became a good working model. The patent which had been taken out in 1769 was prolonged from 1775-1800. The cost of the steam engine amounted to about £13,000, and not until 1786 or 1787 were Boulton and Watt free from debt.<sup>1</sup>

In 1775 a steam engine was supplied by the firm of Boulton and Watt to the Bloomfield colliery in Staffordshire.<sup>2</sup> But Newcomen engines had been increasing in number since the lapse of the patent in 1733, and by 1775 there were seventy in use in collieries; by 1800 only thirty Watt engines had been supplied for use in the coal industry,<sup>3</sup> and "its adoption by the coal industry was exceedingly slow, and the older type predominated in the coalfields till well into the nineteenth century"<sup>4</sup> "The reason, no doubt, lay partly in the terms demanded by Boulton and Watt but the backwardness was largely due to the fact that the saving of coal (the great merit of the invention in the eyes of the Cornish mine-owner) made little appeal to the colliery proprietor, who was often only too glad to find a use under the boilers for the soft, broken, unsaleable coal."<sup>5</sup> As a result of these improvements in methods of pumping water out of the mines, shafts became much deeper and mines larger. A depth of 993 feet was reached at Whitehaven,<sup>6</sup> but the area covered by mines often remained small.<sup>7</sup> Another reason for the slow adoption of machinery in general by industry was that there were no machines for making machines. The machines were hand made, and a great deal depended on the skill of the particular engineers employed, and on the care with which the machines were assembled and installed. To create a body of highly skilled engineers was the work of a generation.

Steam engines only slowly adopted in collieries

The danger of chokedamp had always been serious, but

<sup>1</sup> Mantoux, *Indust. Revol. in Eighteenth Century*, p. 335. For an account of the firm of Boulton and Watt, see E. Roll, *An Early Experiment in Indust. Organisation* (1930).

<sup>2</sup> This engine cost £2,000 (Lord, *Capital and Steam Power*, p. 109).

<sup>3</sup> J. L. and B. Hammond, *Rise of Mod. Industry*, p. 129 n.

<sup>4</sup> Ashton and Sykes, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>7</sup> Thirty acres at South Birtley in 1773 is an example.

(2) Difficulty  
of ventila-  
tion

as deeper shafts were sunk that of firedamp became even more serious. The methods used to overcome these dangers were primitive.<sup>1</sup> But in 1810 Buddle introduced a new system of ventilation, and in 1815 Davy produced his safety lamp. These improvements facilitated the sinking of still deeper shafts, though at first they produced more recklessness amongst colliery owners than safety amongst the workers.

(3) Pit  
transport.

Improvements were also effected in the methods of transporting the coal to the surface. Ponies had been used to draw sledges of coal in the larger collieries of the north during the first half of the century, and by the sixties they were common. Metal rails were used by Richard Reynolds in 1768, by 1794 the Thorncliffe Ironworks of Chapeltown, Sheffield, specialised in supplying iron rails to the collieries of Yorkshire,<sup>2</sup> and by 1813 nearly twenty miles of metals had been laid at Whitehaven.<sup>3</sup> A number of winding machines, patented by Oxley in 1763 and improved by Smeaton, came into use.

(4) Trans-  
port from  
the pit to  
the market.

The need for improvement in the transport of coal from the mine to the market was even greater. The industry was handicapped by the lack of good roads and by the cost and difficulty of transport by water. It was largely Newcastle's favourable situation for exporting coal by sea to London that accounted for its importance, and as late as 1805 only 2,580 tons reached London by inland carriage.<sup>4</sup> In 1752 nearly five-sixths and even in 1798 nearly four-

<sup>1</sup> "The method of treating men rendered unconscious by choke-damp or the afterdamp that followed an explosion was to dig a hole in the ground, put the man's head in it, and cover it with fresh mould. If that proved ineffective, according to an early observer, 'they tun them full of good ale, but if that fail they conclude them desperate'" (Ashton and Sykes, *op cit.*, p. 43).

"If firedamp had collected in some part of the workings, it was the business of a specialised fireman to enter the danger zone and explode the gas while the working colliers were out of the way. This adventurer, clad from head to foot in rags soaked in water, would crawl along the underground way holding in front of him a long pole, at the end of which was a lighted candle. When the explosion occurred he would fling himself face downward, on the floor, and so, with good fortune, he might escape the flame which shot along the roof above him" (*Ibid.*, p. 44).

<sup>2</sup> Ashton, *Iron and Steel in Indust. Revol.*, p. 157.

<sup>3</sup> Ashton and Sykes, *op cit.*, p. 64.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 194.

fifths of the output of the Northumberland and Durham coalfield was conveyed by sea<sup>1</sup> To meet the demand for easy transport of coal the first canals were made, and the construction of canals greatly facilitated the expansion of the industry

In 1700, 2,500,000 tons were produced annually, by 1770 that figure had risen to 6,000,000 tons and the export to Ireland was trebled between 1729 and 1770 By 1800 over 10,000,000 tons were produced annually, partly owing to the new demand caused by improvement in the iron trade The coal industry had not undergone any revolutionary changes in the eighteenth century, but had been steadily improved and continuously expanded

Discontent was common from an early date amongst the colliers, and in 1719 there was a riot at Newcastle, caused by low wages The colliers were, in fact notorious for their violence, and they seem to have had some sort of military discipline and organisation which made them particularly formidable Conditions improved during the century Sledges were substituted for corves carried on the back and then railways replaced the sledges, this lightened the labour and reduced the number of drawers, whose life was particularly hard The employment of women underground was rare, except in the north, and it tended to die out after 1780 Child labour, however, increased, for a child could easily be made to push the trucks along the rails, the children who entered the mine when six or seven years old, worked as many as fourteen or even eighteen hours a day<sup>2</sup> The work of the collier was valuable, his wages were higher than in many other industries, and he was usually bound by a yearly contract After 1775 his wages increased and between 1780 and 1813 his "wages had more than kept pace with prices,"<sup>3</sup> and "in money-wages the coal-miner was better off than most other workers"<sup>4</sup> Hours were long, but they were, at least, no longer at the end of the century than at the beginning But the miner's work was extremely dangerous, accidents were numerous and mortality was high

Increase in output

Conditions of labour in the mines

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 223

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 20 and 163

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 141

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 141

Conditions in the mines were unbelievably insanitary; the miner worked apart from his fellows and remained uneducated and often almost uncivilised<sup>1</sup> Until Acts of 1775 and 1799 were passed to forbid the selling of miners, Scottish colliers were literally slaves, and often elsewhere they worked under conditions which were little better than slavery.

THE IRON  
INDUSTRY

is handi-  
capped by  
lack of  
charcoal.

With the coal industry was closely connected the iron industry. At the beginning of the eighteenth century this was declining owing to shortage of fuel, for the iron industry was almost entirely dependent on charcoal and on supplies of ore and pig iron imported from Scandinavia. In 1720 the output of bar iron amounted to only 20,000 tons; less than 4,000 tons of iron were exported and about 20,000 tons of iron ore were imported. The industry was scattered throughout the country largely owing to shortage of fuel, for smelting was still dependent on the use of charcoal, and the iron furnaces were often far from the iron mines. The need for water-power to provide the blast for the rolling and splitting mills tended, however, to concentrate the industry, and more than half the iron output of the country was produced by works along the Severn.<sup>2</sup> The capital of iron firms was usually considerable even in the early years of the century, and factories were not entirely unknown, for both Ambrose Crowley and Sitwell had established them in the seventeenth century. Increasing foreign competition and rising costs of production, caused by the growing shortage of fuel,<sup>3</sup> provided the stimulus for improvement.

The two  
branches  
of the  
industry

There were two chief branches of the iron industry, one concentrating on the smelting of ore and the production of cast iron, the other transforming pig iron into wrought iron. "The ore was first of all smelted—*i.e.*, reduced to pig—in a blast furnace. Then if destined for casting it was reduced again and run into a mould of the shape required. But if destined for wrought iron, it was refined and hammered

<sup>1</sup> See Webb, *Story of the Durham Miners* (1921).

<sup>2</sup> Hammond, *Rise of Mod. Industry*, p. 134.

<sup>3</sup> Sixteen hundredweight of charcoal was used to produce one ton of pig iron (Ashton, *op. cit.*, p. 86).

into shape. The casting of iron was the work of the foundry, and the finishing of iron the work of the forge."<sup>1</sup>

Attempts to use coal in smelting had been made for at least two centuries, but the first successful attempt was made in 1709 by Abraham Darby I at the Coalbrookdale Works. The improved method was not popular for a considerable time. The inventor was a Quaker, opposed to self-advertisement, the use of coke needed considerable experience and carefully graded coal. It is improbable that Darby's method was used generally outside Shropshire before the middle of the century, and in 1762 the Society for the Encouragement of Arts and Manufactures offered a premium for making pig iron with coke as good as that made with charcoal.<sup>2</sup> But in the sixties smelting with coke became usual and cast iron rapidly replaced wrought iron. In 1778 only 13,000 tons of pig iron were smelted by charcoal, while over 48,000 tons were smelted by coke.<sup>3</sup>

Abraham Darby I invents the use of coke in smelting

The output of pig iron was increased by the provision of an improved blast for the furnace. The Darbys used a Newcomen engine for this purpose, and in 1768 Smeaton introduced a greatly improved blast apparatus at the Carron Ironworks.

The pig iron produced by coke-smelting was unsuitable for refining into wrought iron, and in the wrought-iron branch of the industry charcoal continued to be necessary. This process of fining was very wasteful, for 1½ tons of pig iron were used to make 1 ton of wrought iron and 24 cwt of charcoal were used in the conversion.<sup>4</sup> Many attempts had been made to use coke in fining, particularly by Thomas and George Cranage of Bridgnorth, and by Peter Onions. John Roebuck had been within an ace of success in 1762. In 1783 the process of puddling was patented by Henry Cort, an ironmaster of Fontley in Hampshire, and a naval contractor. By employing a reverberatory furnace (invented twenty years previously) to keep the metal out of contact with the fuel, it was possible to use coal to convert pig into

Wrought iron industry still needs development

Cort invents puddling and rolling

<sup>1</sup> Fay, *Gt Brit from Adam Smith to Present Day*, p. 265

<sup>2</sup> Lipson, *Econ Hist of England*, vol. II, p. 139

<sup>3</sup> Lord, *op. cit.*, p. 144.

<sup>4</sup> Ashton, *op. cit.*, p. 86

wrought iron. Cort also introduced a method of rolling which was much quicker than the old method of beating. His two inventions made it possible to produce wrought iron on a much larger scale,<sup>1</sup> and to use coal instead of charcoal in its production wrought iron could be worked into a much greater number of shapes than was formerly possible. Iron rapidly replaced wood, and there was a great improvement in the manufacture of machinery. Cort's methods were soon widely adopted, especially after the suspension of his patent in 1788. Already by 1788 as much wrought iron was produced by coke as by charcoal, and soon coke completely superseded charcoal.

The  
eighteenth-  
century  
steel trade

Improvement had already been made in the manufacture of steel. "Blistered" steel had been made in the seventeenth century, and steel was used in the manufacture of shears, knives and swords. Soon after 1742 Benjamin Huntsman, a clockmaker of Dutch parentage, living near Sheffield, discovered the crucible process, and cast steel soon became widely used. The process, however, was ingenious and difficult. Steel could be produced only on a very small scale and was four or five times as costly as the best iron. Steel was not manufactured in large quantities before the inventions of Bessemer in 1856 and of the brothers Siemens in 1868 had taken place. Moreover, the earlier steel industry "was not the avenue by which the modern technique of steel production was reached."<sup>2</sup>

Steam  
engines  
used in  
the iron  
industry

The iron industry benefited greatly from Watt's invention of the steam engine. One of his first engines was built for John Wilkinson's works at Broseley in Shropshire in 1775, and was used to blow the blast furnace without the use of a bellows.<sup>3</sup> In 1781 Watt patented his rotary engine and in 1782 supplied John Wilkinson with a steam hammer. Two years later steam-power was applied to the rolling and splitting mill. But in 1800 only twenty engines had been supplied for use in ironworks.<sup>4</sup>

As a result of these inventions iron became cheaper and

<sup>1</sup> Fifteen tons of wrought iron could be produced as quickly as one ton had been formerly.

<sup>2</sup> Fay, *op cit*, p. 266

<sup>3</sup> Hammond, *Rise of Mod Industry*, p. 141.

<sup>4</sup> Lord, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

its output greater. Up to 1755 the increase in the output of iron had scarcely exceeded 1 per cent. per year,<sup>1</sup> but in the second half of the century production increased rapidly. The import of pig iron ceased to increase after 1765, the number of blast furnaces grew from 59 in 1720 to 85 in 1788, and to 221 in 1806, and their output of pig iron from 17,350 tons in 1720 to 68,000 tons in 1788, and to 250,400 tons in 1806.<sup>2</sup> In 1788, 33,000 tons of bar iron were made in Britain; in 1797 it was exported in an appreciable quantity for the first time, and in 1812 exports of bar iron exceeded the import of foreign iron.<sup>3</sup> The turnover of each of the five blast furnaces at Coalbrookdale was £80,000 in 1776, and at Cyfarthfa, in South Wales, Crawshay, who in 1787 produced 500 tons of bar iron with difficulty, produced over 10,000 tons in 1812.<sup>4</sup>

Increased  
output  
of iron.

The industry was more than ever a large-scale one, dependent on capital investment, and the factory became common. In 1812 near Birmingham there were ten iron-works, each of which had cost £50,000, and a single works often employed between three and five hundred men.<sup>5</sup> Matthew Boulton employed 800 men in his works at Soho in 1770.<sup>6</sup> In many cases the ironmasters attempted to secure control of coal and iron mines. The iron industry now became concentrated near the coal-mines, and by 1806 87 per cent of the output of the country was produced in the Midlands, Yorkshire, Derby and South Wales.<sup>7</sup> The relative concentration, due to the need for water-power supplies, was increased by the dependence of the industry upon mineral supplies. The iron industries of South Wales and of the Scottish Lowlands were eighteenth-century establishments.

The in-  
dustry be-  
comes more  
capitalistic

and more  
concentrated.

The allied metal trades are interesting. At the beginning of the century they were already largely concentrated in the Black Country, South Yorkshire and in Northumberland and Durham. By 1737, 45,000 hands were employed in the iron trade in the Birmingham district.<sup>8</sup> They were highly

The metal  
trades

<sup>1</sup> Ashton, *op cit.*, p. 60.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 98.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 97 and 99.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 43 and 97.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 100.

<sup>6</sup> Lord, *op cit.*, p. 80.

<sup>7</sup> Ashton, *op cit.*, p. 100.

<sup>8</sup> Lipson, *Econ. Hist. of England*, vol. II, p. 173 n.



capitalised industries and production was on a large scale; in 1765 Joseph Hancock had six workshops in Sheffield, at Soho, Matthew Boulton's sales amounted to £30,000 in 1763. Specialisation had already taken place, the blacksmiths were divided into thirteen different trades and the cutlers into three sections, each of which was subdivided. Factories were erected in many cases, though the domestic system continued also, as in the Sheffield cutlery and the nail-manufacturing trades. The metal trades benefited from the improved material which was available and machinery was introduced to a considerable degree, drills for boring cannon, metal-turning lathes, nail-making and screw-turning machines coming into use.

Conditions  
of labour in  
the iron  
industry

Conditions of labour in the iron industry were generally good, judged according to eighteenth-century standards. Most of the work was skilled, there was often a shortage of labour, wages were relatively good and rose steadily from the time of the Seven Years' War. The Truck system (payment in kind) was forbidden in 1749. Hours of work were somewhat shorter at the end of the century than at the beginning. At the works of the enlightened Ambrose Crowley at the end of the seventeenth century, the hours were thirteen and a half per day or eighty per week. Towards the end of the century at Coalbrookdale they were twelve hours per day with one and a half hours for meals. "These conditions exhibit substantial improvement over those prevailing in a model factory at an earlier period; and they contrast very favourably also with the hours of toil required to wring subsistence earnings from domestic nail-making."<sup>1</sup> Women and children were employed only in small numbers.

THE  
POTTERY  
TRADE.

The pottery trade also became important in the eighteenth century.<sup>2</sup> The earthenware trade had been established in Staffordshire in the seventeenth century. Improvements had been introduced after the Revolution, whitening by powdered flint was discovered in 1720, moulds were used from 1730 onwards, and plaster of Paris was used for

<sup>1</sup> Ashton, *op. cit.*, p. 194.

<sup>2</sup> See *Econ Hist.*, No. 1 (Supplement to *Econ Journal*), January, 1926, The Potteries in the Industrial Revolution (V. W. Bladen).

the moulds from about 1750. Beginning with a small amount of capital and a considerable knowledge of art, Josiah Wedgwood established his factory at Etruria, near Burslem, in 1769. He rapidly developed the industry, greatly improved communications and introduced philanthropic schemes for his workers. His success as a manufacturer largely depended upon his insistence upon minute specialisation and a careful education of his workers in their trade. By 1793 steam-power was introduced, and the mechanical printing of designs was substituted for hand-painting, but pottery remained predominantly a hand industry till the seventies of the nineteenth century. The output of the Staffordshire potteries increased from less than £15,000 in 1725 to over £75,000 in 1777, and ten years later there were 200 manufacturers employing 20,000 employees.<sup>1</sup>

The silk industry is important as an example of an industry where from the start the factory system was general. It was introduced into England by French Huguenots after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. In 1717 John Lombe introduced the silk-throwing machine into England from Italy, and about 1721 opened a factory near Derby, which was five- or six-storied and had 460 windows. His brother, who supplied the capital, made a profit of £120,000 in fifteen years and became alderman and sheriff of the town.<sup>2</sup> The looms were all housed in the factory and the mills soon were turned by horses. over 300 hands were employed. A similar factory was set up at Stockport in 1752 and at Macclesfield in 1756. in the sixties these employed 2,000 and 3,500 hands respectively.<sup>3</sup> By 1765 there were seven such mills in England. Conditions in these factories were often bad. children began to work at the age of seven or eight and worked from five in the morning till seven at night for a shilling a week.<sup>4</sup>

THE SILK  
INDUSTRY.

These silk factories were probably the model for the cotton industry. The cotton industry, which was established in England by Flemish refugees in the reign of Elizabeth, was

Silk  
factories  
provide  
the model  
for cotton  
factories

<sup>1</sup> Lord, *op. cit.*, p. 143

<sup>2</sup> Mantoux, *op. cit.*, p. 198

<sup>3</sup> Wadsworth and Mann, *Cotton Trade and Industrial Lancashire*, p. 304.

<sup>4</sup> Wadsworth and Mann, *op. cit.*, p. 403

early organised on a capitalistic basis with large-scale production<sup>1</sup> In 1736 two brothers were employing 600 looms and 3,000 hands in the Blackburn district, and before 1737 a small-wares manufacturer of Manchester employed over 100 Dutch looms<sup>2</sup> In 1759 a manufacturer's warehouse "wherein there were nineteen looms with convenient dressing frames" was offered for sale<sup>3</sup> A sail-cloth manufacturer at Deptford had forty-six looms and employed 500 poor families.<sup>4</sup> As in the silk industry, factories were fairly common in the smallwares trades during the first half of the century.

The use of  
capital in  
THE COTTON  
INDUSTRY.

Credit was already extensively used. In 1763 Samuel Touchet, a Manchester merchant, failed with liabilities of £309,000 and assets of £22,000.<sup>5</sup> Titus Hibbert and Son, yarn importers, had deposits of from £10 to over £1,000 from single women, professional men, country gentlemen and small tradesmen<sup>6</sup> The firm of J and N Phillips, the Manchester cotton manufacturers, paid bills in London by drawing on their London drysalters, who in turn collected Messrs Phillips' bills and deducted a commission for their trouble<sup>7</sup> Henry Escricke, a Bolton dealer, bought cotton on six months' credit and sold his finished goods on three months' credit<sup>8</sup> The chapman also bought and sold on credit.

In the  
cotton in-  
dustry the  
domestic  
system was  
general

The domestic system was general, and the cotton spinners and weavers toiled in their own homes; yet they had little real independence. As a rule, though they owned their tools, they worked on the merchant's materials and were paid piece-rates The weaver who spun his own cotton, wove his own yarn and sold his own goods was rare in the eighteenth century. Usually the merchant bought either warp and weft which he distributed to the weaver, or cotton which the weaver would both spin and weave; in either case the merchant distributed raw material and collected finished goods. In neither case was the

<sup>1</sup> Early cotton goods were not pure cottons, but a mixture of cotton and linen, pure cotton goods being imported from India

<sup>2</sup> Wadsworth and Mann, *op. cit.*, p. 211.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 302.

<sup>4</sup> Daniels, *Early English Cotton Industry*, p. 28 n.

<sup>5</sup> Wadsworth and Mann, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 249

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 297 and 298.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 262.

weaver really independent or essentially better than a wage-earner. "The domestic system was a system of capitalist employers, and the typical workpeople were in every essential respect related to these employers in the same way as after the factory made its appearance"<sup>1</sup> And industrial strife was common. the cotton merchant was widely separated in wealth and social position from the small weaver or spinner, opposition to the overcrowding of the industry with apprentices and to sharp practices of the master and embezzlement on the part of the worker was frequent.

But the workers are virtually wage-earners

Yet the growth of the industry had commenced by the beginning of the eighteenth century By 1730 over 1,540,000 lb and by 1764 over 3,870,000 lb<sup>2</sup> of cotton-wool were imported Cotton goods were sold to the London market and exported to the West Indies, America, Italy, Germany, Turkey and China The Dutch loom was introduced into Lancashire after the Restoration, the Sprigg loom was introduced about 1723, and the swivel loom about 1750

The industry is growing

In 1733 John Kay invented the fly shuttle, which made weaving easier and quicker and allowed one man to tend a loom It was not, however, widely used in the cotton industry until the fifties Kay took out a patent for operating looms by water about 1745, but this was not followed until about 1760. In 1738 Paul invented spinning by rollers and established cotton spinning mills in the Midlands, but these lasted only a few years. In 1748 he patented a carding-machine, but this was not used by cotton manufacturers until after 1760.

Kay's fly shuttle improves weaving

The use of the fly shuttle made it possible for the weaver to weave cloth more quickly than the spinner could provide yarn for his use. To meet the demand for increased supplies of yarn, in 1770 Hargreaves, a weaver of Blackburn, patented the spinning jenny, on which he had experimented from 1764-67 This allowed eight, and later as many as 100 or even 208 spindles,<sup>3</sup> to be worked from a single wheel.

Spinning improved by

(1) Hargreaves' jenny,

<sup>1</sup> Daniels, *op cit.*, p 54

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p 24

<sup>3</sup> See *Econ Hist.*, vol. II., No 5 (January, 1930), Crompton's *Census of the Cotton Indust in 1811* (G W Daniels)

It was not generally adopted in Lancashire until after 1773 and it was used in the spinner's home.

(2) Arkwright's spinning machine,

In 1769 Arkwright, a barber of Bolton, invented a spinning machine worked by horse-power which he established in a small factory at Nottingham. Two years later he started a water-driven mill at Cromford. Arkwright's machines were usually driven by water and so were established in factories, not in the worker's home. His first mills were engaged in the manufacture of hosiery. In 1775 he patented a carding-machine, and he began selling spinning machines at £7,000 for every 1,000 spindles. But in 1781 his patent for the spinning machine was upset in a lawsuit, and in 1785 it was definitely set aside.

(3) Crompton's mule.

In 1779 Crompton invented the mule, which combined the principles of the jenny and the spinning machine. At first, like many other early machines, it was made of wood and for use in the cottage; later it was made of metal and in 1790 was driven by a water-wheel, a power-driven mule was established in Stockport in 1791.<sup>1</sup> It was probably not much used until 1785, but soon became important, though in many cases it was worked in the spinner's home. From 1790 the mule was frequently set up in the town factory.

Weaving developed by Cartwright's loom

The inventions improving the spinning process led to the production of more yarn than the weaver could use. But in 1785 Cartwright, a Leicestershire clergyman, invented the first power loom which would enable the weaver to keep pace with the spinner. The loom was first worked in a factory at Doncaster by a bull. It was introduced into Manchester in 1791,<sup>2</sup> but was rarely used until it was improved by Radcliffe and Horrocks, though power looms were used more frequently in Scotland during the nineties.<sup>3</sup> In 1803 Horrocks began to make metal looms, and by 1813 there were 2,400 power looms in England.<sup>4</sup> Cartwright also invented a combing machine in 1794, but this was unsuitable for practical use.

<sup>1</sup> *E.H.R.*, vol. xxxvii. (1922), p. 384, *Transition to Factory System* (G. Unwin).

<sup>2</sup> Lipson, *Hist. of Woollen and Worsted Industries*, p. 166.

<sup>3</sup> Mantoux, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

<sup>4</sup> Hammond, *Rise of Mod. Industry*, p. 183.

Steam-power was also applied to cotton machinery In 1783 Arkwright had a mill where steam was used,<sup>1</sup> four years later Robert Peel purchased a steam engine,<sup>2</sup> and in 1790 Samuel Oldknow introduced one at his mill in Stockport.<sup>3</sup> By 1800 there were eighty-four steam-engines in use in the cotton industry,<sup>4</sup> and by 1813 there were 1,000 looms driven by steam.<sup>5</sup> But the jenny had not entirely gone out of use, and the hand mule was still widely used

The use of steam power

The factory system spread only gradually in the cotton industry. Often it was the introduction of a carding-machine in the last years of the seventies which led to the establishment of the early factories. By 1780 Oldknow had set up his factory at Stockport, but home-spinning and weaving were still widely practised. By 1788 there were forty-one spinning mills in South Lancashire,<sup>6</sup> and in 1795 there were twenty-three large mills in Stockport alone.<sup>7</sup> Oldknow's mill, which had originally been a building 31 by 19 feet, by 1798 covered 7,460 square yards.<sup>8</sup> But he still employed between fifty and a hundred small domestic spinners in the Bolton district and 300 domestic weavers, 193 of whom had only one loom each and sixty-eight of whom had only two.<sup>9</sup> By 1816 Manchester had forty-three mills, employing on an average 300 hands each. But domestic spinning still continued in the country districts and weaving was predominantly a domestic industry till 1820,<sup>10</sup> when power looms improved by Radcliffe and Horrocks came into general use.

and the establishment of factories

Domestic spinning and weaving are still widespread in 1815

Other improvements had taken place in 1780 Bell introduced a revolving press for printing designs, in 1785 Berthollet discovered the use of chlorine in bleaching. The invention of the gin for separating the seed from the fibre by the American, Eli Whitney, took place in 1793. This greatly increased America's output of cotton, which rose

<sup>1</sup> Wadsworth and Mann, *op cit.*, p. 491 n.

<sup>2</sup> Mantoux, *op cit.*, p. 342

<sup>4</sup> Lord, *op cit.*, p. 151

<sup>6</sup> W. Bowden, *op cit.*, p. 78

<sup>8</sup> *E H R*, vol xxxvii, pp 214 and 215

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 218

<sup>10</sup> Wadsworth and Mann, p. 374

<sup>3</sup> *E H R*, vol xxxvii, p. 391

<sup>5</sup> Mantoux, *op cit.*, p. 250 n

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 79

from 500,000 lb. in 1793 to 6,000,000 lb. in 1795 and to 90,000,000 lb by 1810.<sup>1</sup>

Increased  
output of  
the cotton  
industry

The cotton industry greatly expanded as a result of these changes. Two steam looms, attended by one boy, wove three and a half pieces of cloth, while a skilled man with the fly shuttle made one. The average yearly consumption of cotton-wool in Great Britain, which had amounted to just over 1,000,000 lb from 1698-1710, amounted to over 3,600,000 from 1761-70<sup>2</sup> and to over 56,000,000 lb in 1801. The value of cotton goods exported rose from £23,000 in 1701 to £46,000 in 1751, and to £7,050,000 in 1801.<sup>3</sup> By 1784 the cotton industry employed 80,000 hands.<sup>4</sup>

The industry  
is more  
strongly  
capitalistic

The industry was more than ever organised on a capitalist basis. Arkwright's factory at Birkacre, near Chorley, was valued at £4,400, and he and his partners had £30,000 invested in factories. Robert Peel claimed that he employed 6,800 hands, and where the manufacturer provided houses, milk, coal and meat for his employees, as Samuel Oldknow did, this involved a further sinking of capital. Consequently credit played a large part in the industry, and Oldknow paid wages by bill, or "cheques drawn on his own shop for payment in kind at sight." In fact, he was paying cash to his workers to the extent of only 2s in the £.<sup>5</sup>

Conditions  
of labour in  
the cotton  
industry.

Conditions of labour in the cotton industry varied greatly. A good deal depended on the character of the manufacturer: Samuel Oldknow, for example, provided wheaten bread, milk porridge, meat and fruit for his mill-hands; David Dale, the Independent owner of the New Lanark mills, built a model village, let his houses at low rents, guaranteed his employees work, fixed 7 p.m. as the limit for work, and introduced ten schoolmasters for the education of his workers. In other factories, no doubt, conditions were as bad as these were healthy. Many of the machines, so far from damaging the workers, made their lot easier: the jenny made production quicker and raised the earnings of the spinner, it also

<sup>1</sup> Hammond, *Rise of Mod. Industry*, p. 184

<sup>2</sup> Wadsworth and Mann, *op. cit.*, p. 107

<sup>3</sup> Lipson, *Econ. Hist. of England*, vol. II, p. 97

<sup>4</sup> Mantoux, *op. cit.*, p. 265

<sup>5</sup> E.H.R., vol. xxxvii., pp. 395-6

provided more yarn and better yarn for the weaver. The use of the carding-machine also increased the earnings of the carding workers, and the mule, which was at first extensively used in the cottages, increased the output of the spinners. Wages on the whole were above those of agricultural workers, and though agricultural wages increased between 1780 and 1800, wages in industry increased even more<sup>1</sup>. The wages of weavers in Oldknow's mills increased about 50 per cent per loom between 1784 and 1787, and though they did not increase markedly after 1788, family earnings rose because employment was more regular<sup>2</sup>. But there were also periods of acute depression. The development of the several processes was uneven, and the shortage of yarn between the invention of the fly shuttle and the introduction of the spinning jenny tended to raise the wages of spinners and to reduce the earnings of weavers. When spinners were producing more yarn than the weavers could use, before the introduction of the power loom, the wages of spinners fell. For instance, women spinners who were earning 10d to 15d per day in 1764, earned 3d to 5d in 1780, and men's wages fell from 17d to 10d<sup>3</sup>. To reduce costs of production employers often had recourse to sharp practice, the cotton workers of Bolton and Bury complained in 1792 that the manufacturers had changed the fineness of yarn without raising the wages of the spinner, and in 1799 the weavers complained that a weaver who in 1792 made a piece 44 yards long for 22s, was then making a piece of 60 yards long for 11s<sup>4</sup>. Conditions grew worse as mills, driven by steam-power, were established, and the hand-workers were obliged to compete with the machines. Complaints of unemployment among the weavers became more common after the end of the eighteenth century.

The expansion of the cotton industry was punctuated by periods of intense depression. This was caused partly by overproduction, partly by the restriction of markets by war-time interference and very largely by currency troubles. In times of depression, however, it was the domestic workers

<sup>1</sup> Mantoux, *op cit*, p 431.

<sup>2</sup> *E H R*, vol xxxvii p 218.

<sup>3</sup> Mantoux, *op cit*, p 414.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, pp 453 and 454.



Machine  
breaking

who suffered most; the factory often occupied a very large amount of capital, and overhead charges of the manufacturer were so great that he kept the mill at work as long as he could make any profit at all. It was much easier to leave hand-workers in their homes unemployed.<sup>1</sup> In 1779 there was an outbreak of machine breaking in which Arkwright's mill was destroyed but this "was a revolt in a time of acute unemployment and of reduced wages for spinners, though not, perhaps for weavers," and it was intensified because "the cotton twist factories were working, while the hand-workers were plunged into deep distress." It does not prove that machinery led to widespread unemployment,<sup>2</sup> though it does indicate that the workers did not differentiate between the real and the apparent causes of their distress. During years of prosperity the industry became overcrowded and the comparatively good wages of industry attracted large numbers of agricultural labourers who were accustomed to lower rates. When depression set in, the willingness of these new workers to adopt lower standards reduced wages in general.

Child  
labour.

Child labour was widespread in the cotton factories, and often these children were collected from workhouses, sometimes as far away as London. Peel employed over 1,000 children. Children worked long hours, and cruelty was not uncommon. William Hutton, a boy worker in a Derby silk mill, related that he had a pair of pattens fastened to his feet to allow him to reach the machine.<sup>3</sup> But child labour was not an innovation of the factory: children worked from early years, and workhouse children were apprenticed under the domestic system, and there is no reason to suppose that the eighteenth-century parent, forced to toil long hours for a subsistence, was less exacting than the manufacturer.<sup>4</sup> Long hours in cotton factories were general, as many as eighteen hours a day being worked in a Stockport mill

<sup>1</sup> Wadsworth and Mann, *op cit*, p. 405

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 375 and 499.

<sup>3</sup> Mantoux, *op cit.*, p. 425

<sup>4</sup> For an instance of a firm where conditions were good, see *Econ Hist.*, vol. II., No. 5 (January, 1930), An Early Factory Community (F. Collier).

in 1816.<sup>1</sup> Lung diseases were common; the first factory fever appeared in Manchester in 1784; the promiscuity of workshops and dormitories was widespread; foremen and overseers were often tyrannical, and children grew up with crooked backs, mutilated limbs and unhealthy faces. Yet it is doubtful whether conditions in the factory were worse than in the cottage, overcrowded with its looms, its mules and its jennies, and it is improbable that hours of labour were longer.

The history of the woollen industry is different, and machinery was introduced much less rapidly than in the cotton industry. The woollen manufacture was more scattered and new ideas and methods were adopted more slowly. For technical reasons machinery was less easily applicable to woollen than to cotton processes. The woollen manufacturers also were more conservative and cautious than the progressive cotton manufacturers of Lancashire and Cheshire. The woollen industry was an ancient one, and was fettered by established tradition and national restriction. Geographical advantages, particularly the proximity of water supplies, favoured the development of the Yorkshire woollen industry, but these advantages did not make the continued competition of the West Country impossible. For the decline of the West Country clothing trade the opposition of the clothiers to change was largely responsible. The progress of the industry in general was retarded by the absence of any rapidly expanding source of supply of raw material, for had machinery been extensively used earlier, the home supply of wool would have been quite inadequate; the Napoleonic War seriously interfered with European supplies, and Australian wool was not imported to any extent before 1815.

At the beginning of the century the spinning and weaving of wool were perhaps more diffused over the whole country than any other industry, but there were three chief woollen areas, the West Country, Yorkshire and Norfolk. In the West Country, industry was organised on a capitalist basis, production was on a large scale and specialisation was more

THE  
WOOLLEN  
INDUSTRY  
adopts  
machinery  
more slowly.

Its  
organisation  
at the  
beginning  
of the  
century.

<sup>1</sup> Mantoux, p. 485 n.

complete, the cloth produced was of a better class, and the industry was under the control of the clothiers, who were merchants rather than manufacturers. In Yorkshire there were large numbers of independent weavers who both made and marketed their cloth. They owned not only their own looms, but also the material on which they worked, and the whole process of cloth-making, except finishing, was completed under their own roofs. Strife between the employer and his men was much rarer than in the West Country.

Changes  
began in the  
early part of  
the century

Yet even in the north the capitalist clothier was not unknown, for Arthur Young mentions a clothier of Darlington who owned fifty looms. In the Rochdale woollen industry the owner of combing and finishing works became the employer of large numbers of workers and forced the weaver into dependence upon him, and many of the weavers became little better than wage-earners, owning their own looms, but working on an employer's material for piece-rates. Specialisation had begun as early as the fifteenth century, and the combers, spinners, weavers and finishers in some parts were separately organised. The apprentice system, which had almost disappeared in the West Country, was breaking down in the North. Factories, though rare, were occasionally found in the woollen industry, and public fulling mills were common. The woollen was England's chief industry, and by 1740 the West Riding produced 99,000 pieces of cloth, which by 1770 had increased to 178,000 pieces.

Machinery  
begins to be  
introduced

Kay's fly-shuttle, invented in 1733, was not generally adopted in the Lancashire woollen industry until the forties, and in Yorkshire it spread very slowly until 1760.<sup>1</sup> The jenny was not used in Yorkshire until 1773, and its use was not general until about 1785.<sup>2</sup> The power loom was not widely used for woollens until 1830 to 1840.<sup>3</sup> Steam was not applied to woollen spinning until 1785, and by 1800 only nine steam-engines were in use in the woollen and

<sup>1</sup> Wadsworth and Mann, *op. cit.*, pp. 419 and 468.

<sup>2</sup> Mantoux, *op. cit.*, p. 270.

<sup>3</sup> *Econ. Journal*, vol. xvi. (1906), p. 517, *Indust. Organ. in Woollen and Worsted Industrs. of Yorkshire* (J. H. Clapham); and cf. Lipson, *Hist. of Woollen and Worsted Industrs.*, p. 176.

worsted industries<sup>1</sup> Some woollen factories were erected, but in 1803 only a sixteenth of the pieces of cloth made in the West Riding were produced by large factories<sup>2</sup> The report of 1806 on Woollen Manufacture noted the possession of four or five looms by one weaver as exceptional, and, describing the Halifax district, it stated that "the greater part of the domestic clothiers live in villages and detached houses. . . A great proportion of manufacturers occupy a little land, from 3 to 12 or 15 acres each"<sup>3</sup> As late as 1856 only about half of those engaged in the Yorkshire woollen industry were employed in factories<sup>4</sup>

The output of the woollen industry increased steadily throughout the eighteenth century In 1766 only 2,000,000 lb of wool, but in 1817 nearly 17,000,000 lb, were imported Wages were comparatively good, but those of hand-loom weavers fell rapidly early in the nineteenth century<sup>5</sup> Hours were long, but those of the domestic workers were probably longer than those worked in the factory child labour was very widely used<sup>6</sup>

Increased output

Outside Yorkshire machinery was introduced even more slowly in the woollen industry The fly-shuttle was not introduced in the West Country until the nineties, steam was rarely used and factories were unusual Consequently the West Country was yielding its supremacy to Yorkshire

The worsted industry, which had been the chief occupation of the Norwich district, was being developed in Yorkshire between 1750 and 1780 Though the Norwich trade trebled between 1700 and 1770, it was surpassed by Yorkshire<sup>7</sup> The worsted trade was controlled to a much greater extent than the woollen trade by capitalists, the weavers were virtually wage-earners employed by worsted merchants and specialisation was more advanced Machinery was

THE  
WORSTED  
INDUSTRY

<sup>1</sup> Hammond, *Rise of Mod Industry*, p 129 n

<sup>2</sup> Mantoux, *op cit*, p 273

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p 56 n

<sup>4</sup> Lipson, *Hist of Woollen and Worsted Industrs*, p 176

<sup>5</sup> A hand-loom weaver was paid £1 6s 8d for a piece of cloth 24 yards long (a week's work) in 1797-1803, £1 in 1804-10 and 14s 7d in 1811-17 (Lipson, *Hist of Woollen and Worsted Industrs*, p 195)

<sup>6</sup> Lipson, *Econ Hist of England*, vol II, p 63

<sup>7</sup> See *Econ Journal*, vol XX (1910), 'The Transference of the Worsted Indust from Norfolk to the West Riding (J H Clapham)'

adopted more readily than in the woollen industry, but much less readily than in the cotton industry. The first worsted spinning mill was erected in 1787 near Skipton; there was no spinning mill in Bradford before 1794<sup>1</sup> though mills were being erected by worsted manufacturers rapidly after 1790.<sup>2</sup> By 1810 hand-spinning was being generally superseded by machine work. The power loom was not used until the eighteen-twenties and machine combing was not introduced till the forties.

The riots  
of 1811.

In 1811 there were riots in Yorkshire contemporaneous with those of the Luddites in Nottingham. These were not caused chiefly by the use of new machines. In Nottingham the rioters resisted the payment of rent on the stocking-frames; in Yorkshire the shearmen attacked the use of the gig mill. But all the riots were largely caused by depression due to war-time derangement of trade and currency troubles.

EFFECTS OF  
INDUSTRIAL  
CHANGES

(1) Develop-  
ment of  
communica-  
tions

(a) Roads

One result of industrial changes was a great development of communications. At the beginning of the century roads were too few for trade, and those which existed were in bad condition.<sup>3</sup> Since 1555 the parish had been responsible for the maintenance of the highways, and in 1654 local authorities were given the right to make local assessments and to hire labour. But many parishes neglected their duty, and some small parishes along important highways could not bear the cost of upkeep. The first turnpike road was constructed in the reign of Charles II, turnpike trusts being allowed to make roads or take over roads from local authorities, to erect gates and to charge tolls. But even the turnpike roads were often bad. George II. and his Queen once spent the whole night going from Kew to St. James and their coach overturned. Arthur Young, after describing the road from Liverpool to Wigan, added: "Let me seriously caution all travellers who may accidentally purpose to travel this terrible country to avoid it as they would the devil."<sup>4</sup> The roads

<sup>1</sup> Mantoux, *op. cit.*, p. 270 n

<sup>2</sup> *Econ. Journal*, vol. xvi, p. 517

<sup>3</sup> From Tyburn to Uxbridge in 1797 there was but "one possible track, and that was less than six feet wide, and was eight inches deep in fluid mud" (Ernie, *op. cit.*, p. 190)

<sup>4</sup> Mantoux, p. 120.

were infested with thieves, and in 1757 the Portsmouth mail was carried off at Hammersmith. The Young Pretender's Rising in 1745 showed that improved roads were necessary for the defence of the country, and between 1760 and 1774, 452 Acts were passed for the construction and upkeep of roads.<sup>1</sup> Radical improvements in road-making were effected by Metcalfe, the blind genius of Knaresborough, who constructed roads in Yorkshire, Lancashire and Cheshire, by Telford, the Surveyor of Public Works of the Shropshire Justices, who built forty-two bridges and repaired the roads, and by Macadam, Surveyor for Bristol, and later Surveyor-General, who substituted a packing of granite chips for the unbroken flints previously used.<sup>2</sup> Iron bridges were erected over the Severn between Broseley and Madeley, over the Wear at Sunderland and over the Severn above Broseley.

These improvements made road travel much faster. In (b) Coaches. 1766 the Warrington flying coach began to run twice a week to London, doing the journey in three days; coaches ran from London to Edinburgh in between ten and twelve days; the journey from Leeds to London was done in twenty-one hours in 1815. Coaches ran regularly between London and Bristol. By 1816, seventy coaches ran from Manchester, fifty-four running daily. The despatch of mails was speeded up, and in 1816 the mail went from Manchester to London in thirty hours.

Heavy traffic was dependent largely on water transport, (c) Canals. and many improvements in rivers were begun in the seventeenth century. Before 1767 the coal of Merthyr was carried by pony and donkey over mountain paths into Hereford and Cardiff. The Duke of Bridgewater found it cost 9s. or 10s. a ton to carry coal by horse the six and a half miles from the pits at Worsley to Manchester. Coal was usually sent to London by sea, and the development of the inland coalfields and of the inland market was restricted. The carriage to London of a chaldron of coal, which in Newcastle cost 6s., amounted to 15s. 8d., and sea-coal had to pay

<sup>1</sup> Daniels, *op. cit.*, p. 62 n.

<sup>2</sup> See Clapham on *Econ. Hist. of Modern Britain* (The Early Railway Age), pp. 92-97.

duty until 1831.<sup>1</sup> The Liverpool docks had been enlarged and the estuary deepened; river transport had been improved and in the middle of the century 376 vessels traded on the Severn, and boats of 60 to 80 tons reached York.<sup>2</sup> This was insufficient, and it was to deal with the coal trade that the first canals were constructed. The Duke of Bridgewater employed James Brindley to build the canal from Worsley to Manchester in 1759, and this was continued to Liverpool in 1767 and reduced the cost of transporting coal by a half. The construction of the Trent-Mersey Canal (Grand Trunk Canal) was completed between 1766 and 1777. Between 1758 and 1801, 165 Acts were passed for the construction of canals, and of these ninety were designed chiefly for the transport of coal.<sup>3</sup> Companies were formed and their shares sold on the Stock market, a canal fever developed about 1793, and by 1800 there were 3,000 miles of canal in England.<sup>4</sup>

(d) The locomotive.

The metals laid in collieries were the predecessors of railways. A steam-engine had been used experimentally as a locomotive by Murdock, the foreman of Boulton and Watt. Trevithick drove a steam carriage along the ordinary road in 1801, Blenkinsop built a locomotive for a colliery near Leeds in 1811, and Stephenson was already working on his schemes for a railway engine. An iron ship was launched on the Severn by John Wilkinson in 1787, in 1803 Symington launched a steam-driven boat on the Forth and Clyde Canal, and in 1812 Henry Bell launched the steam-driven *Comet*.

(2) Increase of population.

Agricultural and industrial changes had greatly affected the distribution of population. The population of England and Wales, which in 1688 was estimated at 5,500,000, increased only to 6,500,000 by 1750, but expanded to 8,873,000 by 1801, and to 10,164,256 by 1811.<sup>5</sup> The greater productivity of industry, the demand for labour, the provision of winter

<sup>1</sup> Ashton and Sykes, *op cit*, pp 224 and 235

<sup>2</sup> Ernle, *op cit*, p 276

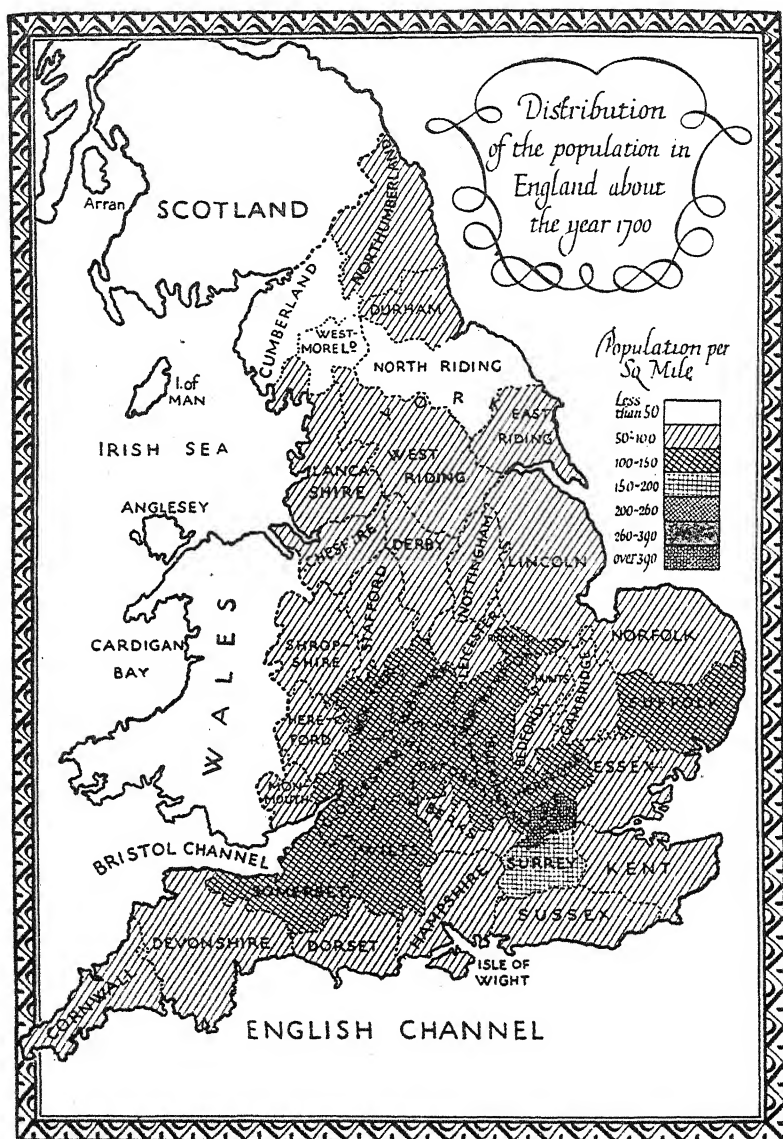
<sup>3</sup> Ashton and Sykes, *op cit*, p 235

<sup>4</sup> On this subject see L. C. A. Knowles, *Industrial and Commercial Revolutions*, and W. T. Jackman, *Development of Transportation in Modern England*.

<sup>5</sup> Cunningham, *Growth of Eng. Indus and Commerce*. *Mod. Times*, part II., p 935.







From Paul Mantoux: *The Industrial Revolution in the 18th Century.* (Cape.)



From Paul Mantoux: The Industrial Revolution in the 18th Century. (Capé.)



supplies, the progress of medical science and the decrease of the death-rate, all helped to produce this steadily accelerating increase of population <sup>1</sup>

Industry was concentrated first on the water supplies and then on the coalfields of the Midlands and the north. In 1700 "the most densely populated counties formed a continuous zone, running from the Bristol Channel to the Suffolk coast" <sup>2</sup> In 1800 the most densely populated counties, apart from the district of London, were Lancashire, the West Riding, Warwick and Staffordshire. The population of the West Riding rose from 240,000 in 1700 to 582,000 in 1801, <sup>3</sup> that of Warwick from 224,000 to 447,000 and that of Lancashire from 240,000 to 672,000 <sup>4</sup>

(3) Its concentration in the Midlands and the north

Large towns were growing up, particularly in the Midlands and the north. London increased from 390,000 in 1660 to 600,000 in 1780, and to 990,000 in 1810 <sup>5</sup> Manchester grew from barely 8,000 in 1700 to 27,000 in 1773, and to 95,000 in 1801, Liverpool from about 5,000 in 1700 to 34,000 in 1773, and to 77,653 in 1801, and Birmingham grew from 25,000 in 1740 to 73,000 in 1801. In Yorkshire, Sheffield grew from about 20,000 in 1760 to 45,000 in 1801, Leeds from 17,000 in 1775 to 53,000 in 1801, Bradford to 13,000 in 1801. Increase of population took place most rapidly in the cotton industry, somewhat more slowly in the iron industry, and much more slowly in the woollen industry

(4) Growth of large towns

These changes, which seemed to take place with increasing rapidity in the second half of the century, had in fact begun at the beginning. The population of Lancashire nearly trebled between 1700 and 1750 and that of the West Riding

These developments had begun by start of eighteenth century

<sup>1</sup> On the subject of the increase of population, see *Econ Hist.*, No 2 (May, 1927) and No 3 (January, 1928), *Family Endowments and Birth Rate in Early Nineteenth Century* (J. S. Blackmore and F. C. Mellonie), *Econ Hist.*, No 3 (January, 1928), *Urban Death Rates in Early Nineteenth Century* (B. Hammond), *Econ. Journal*, vol. xxxii (1922), *Increase of Population in Eighteenth Century as Illustrated by London* (M. D. George), G. T. Griffiths, *Population Problems of Age of Malthus*, M. C. Buer, *Health, Wealth and Population in Early Days of Industrial Revolution*, A. Redford, *Labour Migration in England*

<sup>2</sup> Mantoux, *op. cit.*, p. 358

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 363.

<sup>5</sup> C. Goss, *The London Directories, 1677-1855*

increased by over 50 per cent.<sup>1</sup> Liverpool had more slave-trading ships than Bristol in 1753,<sup>2</sup> and by the middle of the century its trade already exceeded that of its rival.<sup>3</sup> Industry, therefore, only completed changes in the distribution of population which commerce had begun before the eighteenth century

There is little whole-sale migration and de-population

The increase of population in the Midlands and the north did not take place at the expense of the rest of the country. There was little long-distance migration, though 5,000 Irish people settled in Manchester by 1800 and 10,000 before 1804.<sup>4</sup> The migration or fresh establishment of ironworks was also often accompanied by the transportation of its employees. But in general the growing population of industrial districts and towns was enlisted from the neighbourhood. A rising birth-rate, a rapidly decreasing death-rate, and the establishment of subsidiary industries in the district then completed the growth of the population.<sup>5</sup> Though Bristol was surpassed by Liverpool, its population increased from 43,692 in 1753<sup>6</sup> to 63,645 in 1801; Norwich, which fell from being the third largest town in England to tenth, had a practically constant population figure of about 36,000.<sup>7</sup> The density of population in Wiltshire increased by 3, that of Rutland by 5, and that of Lincoln by 10, to the square mile between 1700 and 1801.

Concentration of population only partial by 1815.

The concentration of the population of towns was not so great as large figures might indicate. Though in 1801 Leeds had a population of 53,000, over 20,000 lived in cottages outside the town proper. At the same date over half the population of Lancashire and Cheshire was still scattered in towns and villages of less than 2,000 inhabitants.<sup>8</sup>

The problems of slums were therefore only just beginning

<sup>1</sup> Lord, *op cit.*, p. 55

<sup>2</sup> Wadsworth and Mann, *op cit.*, p. 228 n

<sup>3</sup> Mantoux, *op cit.*, p. 109 and note 4

<sup>4</sup> Wadsworth and Mann, *op cit.*, p. 313

<sup>5</sup> For instance, Messrs Bateman and Sherratt, a pirate firm of Watt's patent, established themselves at Salford and Messrs Hannah Lees and Sons at Ashton to supply textile machinery (Ashton, *op. cit.*, p. 102)

<sup>6</sup> Latymer, *Hist of Bristol*, p. 202

<sup>7</sup> Mantoux, *op cit.*, p. 54 n

<sup>8</sup> Wadsworth and Mann, *op. cit.*, p. 312.

to be serious, and it was already realised that the antiquated towns were unsuitable for modern conditions. In 1731 a historian complained of Manchester's "standing low and the throng of its inhabitants, the narrowness of the streets and the great quantities of Pit coal here burnt"<sup>1</sup>. In 1747 both Manchester and Liverpool applied to Parliament for permission to set up systems of lighting and cleansing. The number of streets in Manchester increased from 167 in 1773 to about 600 in 1794,<sup>2</sup> epidemics broke out in 1784, 1789 and 1794. Dr. Ferriar drew attention to the evils of overcrowding and of living in cellars in 1790, and an extensive remodelling of the town and a rebuilding of its centre took place in 1794. Dr. Percival continued the agitation for improvement, and a Board of Health was established, houses of recovery were erected, and fever wards were adopted in Chester, Stockport, Liverpool and Bolton.

The  
problem  
of the  
slums

The changes in industry greatly increased the output of all the major industries of the country. Between 1688 and 1815 the total exports increased from £4,310,000 to £58,624,000 and the imports from £7,120,000 to £32,987,396. The shipping cleared from British ports increased from 285,000 tons in 1688 to 1,993,188 in 1809.

(5) De-  
velopment  
of national  
commerce

The greater part of the profits of expanding trade went into the pockets of the new capitalists. In 1802 Peel employed over 15,000 hands and paid £40,000 in excise, and in 1830 he left personal estate valued at £1,400,000. Oldknow was reputed to have made £17,000 a year.<sup>3</sup> Profits were made quickly as the turnover of the factory increased. These new capitalists were interested in industry rather than commerce, and their capital was largely invested in fixtures such as buildings and machinery. The capitalist was many times more important in 1815 than in 1700, though the use of capital was common even in the seventeenth century, and in 1815 the capitalist employer was much more widely separated from his men.

(6) The es-  
tablishment  
of the  
industrial  
capitalists

To generalise about the condition of the workers is extremely difficult, since it varied from firm to firm, from

<sup>1</sup> Wadsworth and Mann, *op cit.*, p. 241

<sup>2</sup> Bowden, *op cit.*, p. 106

<sup>3</sup> Mantoux, *op cit.*, p. 255.

(7) The effect of industrial changes on the workers

industry to industry, from process to process and from year to year. The factory system was by no means general in industry by 1815, and the number of domestic workers was still very large, in fact, in 1831 the building trade employed more heads of families than the cotton industry, and the cotton workers were far outnumbered by domestic servants.<sup>1</sup> So that the evils of the factory system affected only a small part of the population. The use of machinery, driven by mechanical means, was also very limited in 1815. That the conditions in many factories were bad is undoubted. They were unhealthy; the work was monotonous, the hours were excessively long, and child labour was widely employed. But it is improbable that in any of these respects the factory worker was worse off than the domestic worker. It is interesting to find the journeyman tailors complaining in 1744 of long hours, night work and ill-health.<sup>2</sup> Conditions in some industries, like the coal trade, improved in the eighteenth century, and it is probable that the factory provided more regular employment than had been usual. The improvement in communications also diminished the effects of bad distribution of supplies and labour. Wages in many industries were relatively good, and earnings of industrial workers were often higher at the end of the century than at the beginning.

But it is as easy to belittle the hardships of the workers as to exaggerate them. Fluctuations in industry were frequent. Enlarged markets made trading more speculative and called for great skill in production and distribution, and there is little doubt that progress in production was outpacing progress in communications. Periodic over-production, followed by depression and unemployment, was usual. Capital was not sufficiently plentiful nor sufficiently well organised in the eighteenth century: firms sank their capital in fixtures, overtrading was encouraged, and when depression set in they had little margin available to tide over the time of crisis. The elementary systems of credit

<sup>1</sup> See Clapham on *Econ Hist of Modern Britain* (The Early Railway Age), pp 71-2

<sup>2</sup> Mantoux, *op. cit.*, pp 72-3.

used, the dependence of manufacturers on capital collected from a variety of sources, the growth of country banks indicate a general attempt to overcome the lack of organised capital, and no one can read the history of the firm of Boulton and Watt without realising the difficulties of the progressive capitalist. But whilst fluctuations in trade brought trouble to the capitalist they brought ruin to the worker. As the Rev. John Clayton remarked in 1755, "our working People . . . live so entirely from hand to mouth that every little accident, that prevents a single week's work, reduces them absolutely to the state of paupers"<sup>1</sup>

In general, conditions were worst in unskilled trades where overcrowding, particularly with agricultural workers, was most easy, and where the hand-worker was competing with the machine. The hand-worker could scarcely hope to maintain the pace, and in time of depression it was easier for the manufacturer to leave him unemployed than to have his mill idle.

The factory-worker objected to the factory on grounds other than of its unhealthy condition or its low wages. He resisted its discipline, its supervision and its mass treatment. He objected to the regularity of its work, and to his loss of holidays, which, under the domestic system, often amounted to three days a week. The factory also was in his mind associated with the workhouse. "Since, then, the workhouse had become a kind of factory, it was perhaps natural that the factory should be regarded as a kind of workhouse"<sup>2</sup>

The workers of the later eighteenth century were also more mentally active than their predecessors, the religious revival assisted their awakening to a realisation of evils which they had tolerated before; and child labour, though perhaps not more widespread than before, aroused greater opposition. Moreover, there was a great contrast between the conditions of the first and the second half of the century. During the first half, harvests were bountiful and conditions were improving rapidly, wheaten bread came into general use, and meat became a more usual item in the worker's menu.

The  
worker's  
objection  
to the  
factory.

<sup>1</sup> Wadsworth and Mann, *op. cit.*, p. 387

<sup>2</sup> Redford, *Labour Migration in England*, 1800-50, p. 22



The contrast between the first half of the century and the second.

In the latter half of the century, harvests were generally bad, wars were more serious, population was increasing, and in the French wars currency troubles became acute.<sup>1</sup> Though industrial and agricultural changes had begun by the beginning of the century, they took place much more rapidly towards the end, and, as the worker found custom being set aside, and innovations constantly being introduced, something of panic and blind adherence to the past largely influenced him. The worker had a keen sense of injustice, for he had an almost infinitesimal part of the profits of the changes, though he had a very large share of their troubles and upheavals. Something of this sense of injustice is seen in Faucher's complaint in 1845: "If the people of Manchester want to go out on a Sunday, where must they go? . . . Everything in the suburbs is closed against them; everything is private property."<sup>2</sup>

Combinations of employers.

Combinations of employers frequently existed from the beginning of the century. There were agreements of ironmasters in the seventeenth century to fix prices given to the wood-owners, and about the middle of the eighteenth century the Midland iron manufacturers were powerfully organised for price arrangement and for political action. In the coal industry agreements among the Newcastle merchants to restrict output and to fix prices were common. The cotton manufacturers of Bolton had a "black book" of men they would not employ, worsted manufacturers formed a committee for the prosecution of embezzlers.

Trade unions

On the other hand, trade unions also existed long before the introduction of machinery and factories, which proves that industrial disagreement was not the product of the latter part of the eighteenth century. The combers of Coggeshall, in Essex, had a union in 1688; the West-Country weavers had one in 1700, and about the same time unions existed in Yorkshire and probably in Lancashire also. Riots and strikes were frequent and were particularly formidable

<sup>1</sup> Wadsworth and Mann, *op cit.*, pp 356-60, and Ernle, pp 269-70.

<sup>2</sup> *Econ Hist Rev.*, vol. ii. (1929), p 224, Industrial Revolution and Discontent (J. L. Hammond) See also Hammond, *The Age of the Chartists: A Study in Discontent*

when the miners were concerned in them. petitions to Parliament were also frequently drafted These unions usually levied subscriptions and had a common fund They aimed at excluding from the trade the "illegal apprentice" (*i.e.*, one who had not served the statutory seven years), at regulating the number of apprentices employed, at obtaining higher wages and shorter hours Many of the unions did the work of Friendly Societies, providing sick and unemployment benefits for their members They were usually small and scattered, many of them were short-lived and the systematic organisation of trade unions did not take place till the nineteenth century

The attitude of the Government to these unions was generally unsympathetic, for it was itself responsible for the regulation of wages Combinations of the tailors were forbidden in 1720, of the wool-combers and weavers in 1726, of the silk-workers in 1765, and later of the hatters and paper-makers In 1799, when unrest under the influence of the French Revolution was widespread and England was at war with France, the general Combination Act was passed This allowed a member of a union to be summarily convicted by a single justice and the minimum penalty was three months' imprisonment or two months' hard labour Appeal to the Quarter Sessions was allowed, but the appellant had to produce bail for £20 and pay costs if his appeal was unsuccessful In 1800 the Act was amended so that a man might be convicted only by two justices, neither of whom was to be connected with his trade Unions continued to exist, some disguised as Friendly Societies, others openly tolerated as unions. In 1800 also an Arbitration Act was passed which obliged each side in an industrial dispute to nominate an arbitrator, and in case of disagreement a Justice of the Peace was to make a decision

The efforts of the workers to have the Elizabethan apprentice laws enforced met with little success, and petitions were regularly ignored In 1803 the Statute of Apprentices was suspended, and it was then annually suspended until it was finally repealed in 1809 In that year the regulations fixing the quality and size of cloth were also withdrawn,

THE ATTITUDE OF THE STATE TO INDUSTRY  
Opposition of the Government to combinations -

and its neglect to enforce regulation of industry

though they had not been systematically enforced through the eighteenth century. The Act against the use of gig mills which the shearmen had tried to have enforced in 1737, 1795 and 1802 was also repealed. On the other hand, whilst the manufacturers were left with few restrictions enforced, repeated Acts against embezzlement of materials by the workers were passed, and laws against machine breaking were carried in 1769 and 1812.

The Factory  
Act, 1802.

The Factory Act of 1802 applying to apprentices taken from workhouses was regarded as an exceptional measure. It was introduced by Robert Peel, and it provided for the regular cleansing and ventilation of factories, the separation of boys' from girls' dormitories, and it limited the working day of an apprentice to twelve hours, exclusive of meals, and these hours had to be worked between 6 a.m. and 9 p.m. The Act was to be enforced by two local inspectors chosen from the magistrates and clergy. But the Act was largely evaded.

Regulation  
of wages

The Elizabethan laws providing for the fixing of wages by the justices also remained in force, but were not regularly carried out.<sup>1</sup> Assessments were sometimes made until about the middle of the eighteenth century, but the State regulation of wages was almost certainly not general. The courts tried to limit the statutory obligation of fixing wages to agriculture, and a Parliamentary committee in 1724 recommended that "some more effectual method be provided for obliging the Justices of the Peace to assess the wages."<sup>2</sup> In 1757 the clothiers secured the repeal of the Act of the previous year which had re-enacted the obligation of the justices to fix wages in the woollen industry, and so the regulation of wages in that industry was definitely abandoned. But Parliament passed the Spitalfields Act in 1773 which empowered the justices to fix wages in the silk industry. But these Acts were generally neglected; the justices were often masters and were interested in their evasion, and there was no authority to see that their duties were fulfilled. Attempts

<sup>1</sup> See *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, vol. xliii (1928), p. 398, *Some New Evidence on Wage Assessments in Eighteenth Century*.

<sup>2</sup> Lipson, *Econ. Hist. of England*, vol. iii., p. 264.

to fix a minimum wage for workers in 1795 and 1800 failed, and a petition signed by 130,000 weavers in 1807 for the fixing of a minimum wage produced no Parliamentary action. While the right of the State to regulate wages was not abandoned, little was done to see that regulation was actually effected

The State also remained concerned with the Poor Law system. The Act of Settlement was designed to reduce vagrancy: each parish was responsible for its own poor, and disputes frequently arose regarding paupers who left one parish and went into another. The Act of 1662 had allowed settlers in a new parish to be expelled within forty days unless they lived in a tenement of the yearly value of £10. But in 1697 free movement was allowed until the settler actually became chargeable on his new parish when he could be returned to the parish where he was last legally settled, which was responsible for his maintenance. The Act caused considerable inconvenience, for a certificate accepting responsibility for his maintenance had to be obtained from the parish, and if the parish wished to retain its population, a certificate might be withheld. The parish would also wish to be satisfied that the settler was going to obtain permanent employment, because if he had to be returned the cost of his return was borne by the parish of his original settlement. In 1795 the issue of certificates was made unnecessary, and the parish where the pauper was actually settled was made responsible for his removal.<sup>1</sup>

The Act of  
Settlement

The Law of 1601 remained the basis of the Poor Law system. Relief was to be provided for the necessitous and the aged, the able-bodied were to be set to work, and the rogue was to be sent to the House of Correction. An Act of 1722 forbade the giving of relief, except in the workhouse, and this effected a reduction of the poor-rate. It was followed by a stern Vagrancy Act in 1744. But public opinion revolted against this severity, and in 1782 Gilbert's Act was passed. Provision was made for the union of parishes for poor-relief purposes, the able-bodied were no

The Poor  
Law  
system

<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of the effects of the Acts of Settlement, see Redford, *Labour Migration in England*, chap. v.

longer to be accommodated in the workhouse, but were to be provided with work at the public expense. There was a sharp increase in the poor-rate, from an annual average of £689,000 in 1748-50, to £1,521,000 in 1776, to £1,912,000 in 1783-85. By 1783 parishes had begun to subsidise wages, and later the employer was given a definite subsidy and was allowed to pay what wages he liked.<sup>1</sup> In 1795 the justices of Speenhamland, in Berkshire, adopted the system of increasing wages up to a minimum, which varied according to the price of wheat. This system was soon copied, and by 1834 it had been adopted by almost all counties, except Northumberland and Durham. The allowance system, excellent in intention, had the effect of encouraging the employer to depress wages. It was, however, essential to the prevention of serious rioting in the middle of the French wars. Poor relief again rose in amount, reaching £4,077,000 in 1803, £6,656,000 in 1812 and £5,724,000 in 1815.

The increase of poor relief not primarily due to industrial and agricultural changes

The increase in poor relief was not to be attributed largely to the effects of enclosure and machinery. These no doubt caused temporary dislocation and unemployment, but before 1815 there is no proof that they were the chief causes of poverty. There were many lean years in the second half of the century, the wars brought increased hardships, the population was growing rapidly, and the people had little margin to provide for the distress caused by fluctuations in trade. The disorder of the currency, occasioned by the French wars, completed the trials of the worker.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Chambers, *Nottingham in Eighteenth Century*, p. 243

<sup>2</sup> See Redford, *Econ Hist of England, 1760-1860*, chap. vii

## CHAPTER IX

### SCOTLAND AND IRELAND, 1689-1815

IN Scotland, as in England, there was considerable resistance to James II, though there the opposition was less intense because religious parties were more sharply divided. Events in England led to a revolution in Scotland also. In January, 1689, an assembly of Scottish nobles and gentry invited William to take control of the administration of the country. Thereupon William summoned a Convention, suspending the Test which would have excluded Presbyterians from voting in the election. The attitude of the Scots was made more certain when a letter from James was read in which he refused to adopt a conciliatory attitude; this forced his followers to withdraw from the Convention, and the Presbyterians and Anglicans were left supreme.

§ 1 *Scotland*  
*The Revolution in*  
*Scotland*

The Convention then declared that James had forfeited the Crown, and offered the throne to William and Mary. The Scottish Parliament, however, obliged the King to consent to the abolition of the Committee of the Articles. This was composed of thirty-two nominees of the three estates of Parliament together with the chief officers of State: it had become the tool of the royal will, and since it prepared the business to be submitted to the Parliament, it had become the instrument by which the King acquired complete ascendancy over the Parliament. The abolition of the Committee of the Articles therefore meant that the Scottish Parliament would in future be independent.

leads to the  
abolition of  
the Com-  
mittee of  
the Articles

The Episcopal Church was now disestablished, and the lay patronage of the Church abolished. This aroused considerable unrest, for the Episcopalians were very strong north of the Tay, and were a powerful minority even in the south, many of them therefore soon became allies of the Jacobites. Presbyterianism again became the recognised religion of Scotland, and government by kirk-sessions, presbyteries,

and the re-  
establish-  
ment of Pres-  
byterianism

synods, and general assemblies was re-established. Presbyterian ministers who had been evicted since 1661 were restored. The Revolutionary Settlement in Scotland therefore ensured the dominance of the Presbyterian Lowlands. There was, however, to be freedom of worship for all who would take the oath of allegiance to William, and there was no Test to exclude any Scottish people from office.

The rising  
against  
William.

Killiecrankie

The  
Massacre of  
Glencoe,  
1692

William was never popular in Scotland. His proclamation was immediately followed by a rising of the Highlanders, which was inspired partly by patriotic opposition to England, and partly by the hatred of the Western clans for Argyll (one of William's chief supporters). The Highlanders were completely victorious at Killiecrankie, but their leader, Dundee, was killed: without a leader, the rebels soon laid down their arms. William offered an indemnity to all those who took the oath of allegiance by December 31, 1691. The Macdonalds of Glencoe delayed until the last, made their way to Fort William, found that its commander had no authority to receive the oath, and, having hastened to Inverary, took the oath on January 6, 1692. William issued a general order for the execution of vengeance on those who had not taken the oath by the prescribed date. Sir John Dalrymple, one of William's advisers, saw his opportunity to attack his old enemies, the Macdonalds, and had the punishment carried out by Campbell of Glenlyon. The Macdonalds, not suspecting any ill-treatment, received the Campbells: their retreats were cut off, and then on February 13 they were massacred. Thus William's reign opened with a great blunder, whose memory long kept alive the hostility of the Highlanders to English rule. William, though not responsible directly for the actual massacre, was the author of the general order, and took no steps to prevent its entirely unnecessary execution. A royal commission was appointed which censured Dalrymple, but did its best to exculpate the King: no attempt was made to punish those who carried out the massacre.

The failure  
of the Darien  
scheme

The next important incident revealed the intense commercial jealousy of the two countries. The years 1693-1700 were years of great scarcity in Scotland, and distress was

widespread The Scottish African Company was founded in 1695 to trade with Africa and the Indies the capital was to be subscribed partly in England and partly in Scotland The English East India Company took alarm, accused the directors of interloping, and roused such an agitation that the attempt to raise part of the capital in England was abandoned In 1698 the Company founded a colony in the Isthmus of Panama Difficulties with the Spaniards developed, help was refused by the English colonies and the settlement was ruined by famine and disease The Scots blamed the King for the failure of their venture the only cure for this rivalry was Union and the grant of free trade.

In 1702 Commissioners for a Union began to meet, but when England refused to consider allowing the Scots free trade, the negotiations broke down In the early years of Anne's reign, the dangers of a Scottish Parliament of one House, no longer controlled by the Committee of the Articles, became apparent The Parliament passed an Act of Security which declared that on Anne's death the Parliament would have the right to choose her successor, and he should not be King of England unless guarantees were given for the independence of Scotland This Act was vetoed by the Queen's commissioner, was re-passed in 1704, and received the Queen's consent The English Government, alarmed at the possibility of Scotland taking an independent course while England was at war with France, retaliated by passing an Act declaring that all Scots should be treated as aliens unless the crown of Scotland followed the precedent of the English succession

and friction  
between the  
two king-  
doms show  
the need for  
Union

In 1706 each country appointed thirty-one commissioners to determine the terms of a Union Marlborough's victory at Ramillies convinced the Scots that their hope of assistance from France in support of the Stewarts was remote, and it also made the English more than ever ready to settle Scottish troubles, so that their whole energy could be devoted to the war The Act of Union was passed by the Parliaments of both countries in 1707 The independent Scottish Parliament was to cease, and Scotland was to be represented in

The Union,  
1707,



the English House of Lords by sixteen peers, elected by the whole body of Scottish Lords, and in the House of Commons by forty-five members, thirty representing the counties and fifteen representing groups of burghs. There was to be free trade between the two realms; the Presbyterian Church of Scotland was left intact; and the use of Scottish law and the existence of the Scottish courts were recognised. Scotland was in future to pay one-fortieth of the taxation of Great Britain, and as her National Debt amounted to only £160,000 while that of England amounted to over £17,000,000, she was to receive compensation of £400,000 from England. This was to be used to establish a new coinage, to settle the affairs of the bankrupt Africa Company and to encourage trade.<sup>1</sup>

is unpopular  
in Scotland

The Union remained unpopular for a considerable time. When, in 1711, the English House of Lords reversed a decision of the Edinburgh Presbytery inhibiting an Episcopalian clergyman, Greenshields, from substituting the English for the Scottish Episcopal liturgy, riots broke out. In the same year the Scots vigorously opposed the imposition of a duty on the export of linen and a tax on malt. The restoration of lay patronage in the Church in 1712 also aroused widespread discontent. Particularly in the Western Lowlands, the Covenanters were more hostile to a High Church Queen than they had been to the tolerant William, and at the end of Anne's reign a Bill for the repeal of the Union was defeated by a very small majority.

The Jacobite  
rising in  
1715

In 1715 the Jacobites rose in rebellion. The Duke of Ormonde was with the Old Pretender plotting for a landing in England, when the Earl of Mar raised the Jacobite standard at his castle of Kildrummy. Beginning with only sixty followers, he succeeded in collecting between 3,000 and 5,000 men, and in occupying Perth. Half-hearted, dilatory and inefficient, he then remained inactive. Ormonde attempted a rising in Devonshire, but met with no Jacobite welcome there: he therefore dissuaded James from making a second attempt. The English Jacobites of Northumberland, who had been roused by Mr. Forster, and who had

<sup>1</sup> The Act is printed in Grant-Robertson, *Select Statutes*, p. 162.

joined part of the Scottish rebel forces at Kelso, invaded England, were rounded up at Preston, and surrendered without a blow. The Battle of Sheriffmuir where both Mar and Argyll claimed the victory, prevented the Scots advancing South. James landed in Scotland in January, 1716, and marched to Perth, to find a meagre following of 4,000 awaiting him. He immediately evacuated the town, and early in the next month he and Mar fled to France the rising then collapsed.

There were many reasons for the failure of the rising. The Jacobites in France had been well watched by the servants of the Earl of Stair, the English representative in Paris, and had been made impotent by their lack of organisation and their inability to keep their plans secret. The Regent in France, anxious to prevent the accession of Philip V to the French throne,<sup>1</sup> wished to retain the friendship of England and could not afford to risk alienating the English Government: he therefore had the ammunition which had been collected at Havre for the use of the Pretender unloaded. Without considerable foreign assistance, the Jacobites could not hope for success. Their chief strength was in the Highlands, but there the devotion of the Highlanders to their chieftains left everything dependent on the attitude of the chiefs. These were divided, for Argyll was actively loyal and Atholl was too jealous of Mar to support the rising. Mar took action largely because he had been deprived of his office as secretary in 1714, and he was quite inefficient. James landed in Scotland when the rising was almost ended, and he was uninspiring in appearance and in character. The English Jacobites had been very reluctant to take action until they saw a real prospect of success, and owing to the zealous collection of information in France by the Earl of Stair, their actions were closely watched. The number of rebels in England was therefore very small, and those in Scotland were also too few to maintain any prolonged resistance. Everything depended upon that swift and secret action which the inefficiency of Mar, the lukewarmness of the Jacobites and the watchfulness of Stair made impossible.

fails because  
(1) it lacks  
French  
support,

(2) it has  
little sup-  
port except  
in the High-  
lands,

(3) the clans  
are divided,

(4) the rising  
has no  
efficient  
leader,

(5) England  
is apathetic

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 49-51.

The end of  
the rising

Of the prisoners, one in twenty chosen by lot was committed for trial less than a hundred of those who were captured in Scotland stood their trial, and none was executed. In England fifty-seven were executed, fifty-three died in prison and over 700 were banished. An Act was passed for the disarming of the Highlands, but this remained a dead letter. The Pretender, after returning to France, was obliged by the Regent to depart first into papal territory at Avignon, then to Rome. In England the most important effect of the rising was the passing of the Septennial Act.

Unrest con-  
tinues in  
Scotland.

In Scotland unrest continued. A second Act for the disarming of the Highlands was passed in 1725, but this again had little effect. General Wade constructed 250 miles of roads in the Highlands, and built new forts at Inverness and Fort Augustus. All this was insufficient to tame the Highlanders, who remained devoted to their clan leaders. In 1724 agitation broke out afresh against the Malt Tax, and the English Government was forced to abandon its application to Scotland. In 1736, following the execution of a smuggler, the Edinburgh mob attacked the City Guard and threw stones at its leader, Captain Porteous. Porteous ordered the guard to fire, and six of the mob were killed and eleven were wounded. Porteous was tried for murder, condemned to be executed, and respited by the English Government. Thereupon the mob broke into the gaol and hanged him forthwith. This led to serious trouble, and the withdrawal of the charter of the city was considered: fortunately less stringent measures were taken. The Lord Provost was removed from his office and the Corporation fined £2,000, which was handed over to the Captain's widow. Not only was Scotland dissatisfied with the Union, and seriously discontented with the increase of taxation, but both the Presbyterian and the Episcopalian Churches were opposing the unsympathetic Government. The Presbyterian Church was divided by the Marrow controversy and by the restoration of lay patronage: the first secession<sup>1</sup>

The Por-  
teous Riots,  
1736.

<sup>1</sup> *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*, published in 1646, was republished at the instigation of the Rev. Thomas Boston in 1718, and immediately provoked a storm which largely turned on the doctrine

took place in 1740. In the Episcopalian Church a feud had begun about the use of ritual and ceremonies

In 1745 there broke out the rising of the Young Pretender. Embarking from Nantes with one small ship, he arrived in Scotland with seven companions and raised his standard on August 19. He immediately marched on Perth and then occupied Edinburgh. Cope, the English commander, was defeated at Prestonpans; the rebels crossed the frontier, and by November 28 Charles was in Manchester. Marching rapidly, he reached Derby on December 4. For a moment panic seized London, but the Pretender, advised that his forces were totally inadequate, was obliged to order the retreat. The plundering of his followers only deepened the hostility of the towns of northern England, and an attempt on Charles's life was made at Wigan. By December 26 he was back in Glasgow. In the following February he encamped at Inverness; his supply of money had long been exhausted, his soldiers had been paid in meal, and even this was running short. The Duke of Cumberland had been recalled from the Continent to take up the command of the British forces, and he overwhelmed the Pretender at the Battle of Culloden—a victory marred by his brutal vengeance. For six months Charles was hunted by the English and protected by the Scottish peasants, but on September 20 he re-embarked and reached Brittany nine days later.

The rising  
of 1745.

Battle of  
Culloden,  
1746

In some ways the rebellion of 1745 was more serious than that of 1715. England was occupied in the War of the Austrian Succession, her soldiers were abroad, and the ease with which the Pretender reached Derby showed the defenceless state of the country. The clans of the Highlands

The rising  
appears  
dangerous  
to England

of grace. "The Marrow" was condemned by the Assembly in 1720 and the Marrow-men were formally rebuked in 1722. The Marrow-men accused the Church of turning religion into mere morality.

Ebenezer Erskine, a Marrow-man, attacked the restoration of lay patronage—*i.e.*, the appointment of a clergyman to a living by a secular patron instead of by the election of the congregation—in 1732, was censured by the Assembly and expelled from his office in the Church. After the Assembly had made a vain attempt at reconciliation, Erskine launched a wider attack on the Church, and in 1740 he and his followers were expelled from the Church. That was the first secession.

but has little  
chance of  
success

were fairly equally divided<sup>1</sup> Charles was tall and attractive, sharing the hardships imposed on the ordinary soldier, he soon won the hearts of his followers: he was young, adventurous, and active. Yet his chance of success was small. The Highlanders were never numerous: the Pretender set out with about 6,000 followers, they were reluctant to cross the border, and at least 1,000 deserted. The Lowlands were apathetic, and the chief towns such as Glasgow, Paisley, Perth, Dundee, and Edinburgh were loyally Hanoverian. The English were more than ever resolved not to risk anything for a Stewart adventurer, who nowhere was able to create a serious cleavage in the nation. Walpole's policy of peace and commercial development had brought satisfaction with the Hanoverian régime to England, and had begun to win the favour of the Lowlands of Scotland. The Pretender left for Scotland in secret, and the French Government was in any case unable to give any considerable assistance.

The end of  
the rising

After the rebellion was over, one in twenty of the rebels chosen by lot was hanged, and about seventy-seven suffered this penalty. As the Episcopalians had been the associates of the Jacobite rebels, their meeting-places were suppressed by an Act of 1746. The Episcopalian clergy were obliged to take oaths of allegiance and to pray expressly for the King of England, and they had henceforth to be ordained by bishops of the Church of England or Ireland. The Highlands were now disarmed, the wearing of Highland dress was prohibited and the tenure of land by military service was abolished<sup>2</sup>. To crush the power of the Highland chiefs, an Act was passed abolishing their feudal jurisdictions and handing them over to the sheriffs and sheriffs-deputes—the nominees of the Crown: the chiefs were, however compensated for their loss by payments totalling £152,000.<sup>3</sup> Gradually civilisation and a measure of prosperity began to penetrate even the Highlands. In 1782 the Act proscribing Highland dress was repealed, and two years later the lands

The disarm-  
ing of the  
Highlands

<sup>1</sup> See *Polit Hist*, vol ix, pp 391-2

<sup>2</sup> Grant-Robertson, *Select Statutes*, p. 214

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p 221.

forfeited to the Crown by the rebels of 1745 were restored to their legal heirs

The years after 1745 were years of prosperity for Scotland. Longer leases became general, farms increased in size, lands were improved; the Forth and Clyde Canal was built, the Clyde was deepened at Glasgow, and the Tay Bridge was erected at Perth. The linen industry was particularly flourishing. In 1727 its total output was valued at £103,000, but by 1770 it was valued at £632,000. The woollen industry was also developing, cotton manufacture was introduced after the American Revolution, and the iron and coal industries were extended. Scotland's foreign trade was steadily increasing, and dissatisfaction with the Union was diminishing.<sup>1</sup>

Economic prosperity of Scotland after the rising

The political condition of the country was less satisfactory. The method of electing the burgh members lent itself admirably to management, and these members were frequently the mere nominees of the English administration. In particular, Pitt secured the adherence of the Scottish members through the management of Dundas. After the French Revolution had begun, a widespread agitation sprang up in Scotland for the reform of the burgh system and the extension of the franchise. In 1792 the Society of the Friends of the People was formed and a General Convention met at Edinburgh. This aroused the suspicions of Pitt, and many of its leaders were prosecuted. Muir and Palmer, two of its outstanding supporters, were sentenced to long periods of transportation. Until 1815 there was little hope for the reform movement, and discontent continued up to the passing of the Reform Bill.

The need for political reform

leads to popular agitation

In Ireland discontent with English rule was even stronger and more persistent than in Scotland. The Irish Catholics broke out into rebellion at the Revolution, and Tyrconnel led the opposition to William. The envoy whom William sent to negotiate with him went over to his side, and in 1689 James landed at Kinsale, with the assistance of five French officers and French ammunition and supplies. The Irish Catholics met with serious resistance only at Londonderry.

§ 2 Ireland  
The Catholic Rising, 1689

<sup>1</sup> See H. Hamilton, *The Industrial Revolution in Scotland—Economic History of Scotland in 18th and 19th Centuries* (Histor. Assoc. Leaflet No. 91).

Battle of  
the Boyne,  
1690

and Enniskillen. Londonderry was closely besieged, but in 1689 it was relieved by a force from England. the men of Enniskillen also routed the Catholics at Newtown Butler. In the next year William despatched Schomberg, his best general, to Ireland, and followed himself with sufficient soldiers to bring the number in his army up to 40,000. William's victory over James at the Battle of the Boyne was followed by the reduction of Leinster, and James was obliged to return to France. After capturing Waterford, William returned to England, leaving Ginkel in command, and by 1691 Limerick, the last centre of the rebels, was reduced and the Treaty of Limerick drawn up. The French had failed to make any use of their naval victory at Beachy Head in 1690, and England's loss of her command of the sea did not prevent her armies from crossing to, or returning from, Ireland.

The Revolution  
disastrous for  
the Irish

For the Irish people the Revolution was disastrous, since it was a victory for the Protestants and for the moneyed classes. Increased disabilities were now placed upon the Irish Catholics and Irish trade was deliberately ruined. There were 300 members of the Irish House of Commons, and of these 234 represented towns: the power of the English patrons was well established in almost three-quarters of the boroughs. The Acts of the Irish Parliament could be vetoed by the English Government, and after 1719 any Act of the English Parliament could be made applicable to Ireland without consulting the Irish.<sup>1</sup> Until 1767, when an Octennial Act was passed, the session of the Irish Parliament was unlimited, so that elections were very infrequent, and Ireland had no independent representation. Yet the country was burdened with taxation for the benefit of England: the taxes were farmed to English collectors, and were used to keep up an Irish army which fought in England's wars; the Irish budget was burdened with a long list of pensions to English favourites. In 1700 Ireland had a national debt of £16,000, but by 1779 it had increased to over £1,000,000. Between 1760 and 1770 the pensions paid out of Irish funds increased from £54,000 to £85,000,

Political  
subordina-  
tion of the  
country to  
England

Ireland  
taxed for  
the benefit  
of England

<sup>1</sup> Grant-Robertson, *Select Statutes*, p. 204.

and from 1757 a deficit became usual. When in 1749 the Irish Parliament claimed the right to appropriate its supplies, the King refused to admit its claim.

Ireland was treated by the Navigation Acts as a foreign country. She was prevented from sharing in colonial trade except through English ports: as a result her shipping was crushed, and in 1698 Dublin had one ship and Belfast and Cork only a few small ones. There were no large ships in the whole kingdom. Between 1723 and 1772 Irish tonnage was reduced by one quarter, whilst England's share in the Irish carrying trade increased. The importation of Irish cattle, sheep and swine into England had been prohibited in 1667, and the Irish had to turn to the production of meat and dairy produce, which they exported to England, France and Spain. The growing of corn in Ireland was discouraged by the English Corn Laws, which excluded foreign corn until English corn sold at 48s. per quarter. Consequently Ireland's tillage greatly declined, and the provision trade remained its chief industry. After the Revolution the Irish woollen trade was deliberately ruined. In 1698 the export of Irish wool, which had previously formed the chief item in Irish foreign trade, was completely prohibited, and the export of woollen manufactured goods to any country but England was forbidden. Export to England was impracticable because the prohibitory duties of 1661 were retained. Irish wool merchants had henceforth to smuggle wool to the Continent, and woollen manufacturers had to concentrate on the production of coarse materials suitable for the home market. The result was that the skill of the Irish manufacturer was soon lost. The Irish cotton industry suffered when all cotton manufactures were excluded from England by an Act of George I's reign, and in 1746 the export of Irish glass goods was also forbidden. Ireland's only prosperous industries were the provision and linen trades.

The land system was equally opposed to Irish interests. A large part of the Irish land was owned by English landlords, who rarely even visited their estates, which were leased out in large tracts to land speculators. Absentee

Economic  
subordina-  
tion

Restrictions  
on (1) ship-  
ping,

(2) agricul-  
ture,

(3) industry

The evils of  
the Irish  
land system



landlords took rents amounting to £91,000 in 1692, £1,227,000 in 1783, and to over £2,000,000 in 1804 from Irish tenants. The landlord's lessee sublet his lands to the Irish peasantry, but whilst the middleman had a long lease, the peasant's lease was short. When the leases came to an end, they were frequently auctioned, and the peasant had either to face eviction or to offer a high rent which he probably could not afford to pay. In any case, the majority of Irish peasants were Catholics and Catholics were forbidden to have leases for longer than thirty-one years. This system was not only unjust to the peasant, it was disastrous to the country. The Irish peasant, saddled with exorbitant rents, could not afford to develop his holding or to stock it adequately, and as his lease was short and its renewal uncertain, he had little inducement to attempt improvements. As a result Irish farming was almost mediæval in its methods.

Religious disabilities of the Catholics.

The Catholics were placed under the severest restrictions. They could not sit in Parliament; they could not hold office; they were excluded from the legal and teaching professions; they could not hold long-period leases, and the son of a Catholic could secure the succession to his father's estates only by turning Protestant. A Catholic might not even own a horse valued at more than £5. The Established Church was Anglican, and to this the Irish people paid tithes, and though the Protestants in Ireland represented not more than a sixth of the population, the rest had to pay to maintain a Church in which they did not believe. The collection and assessment of tithes were grossly unjust, for whilst the pastures of the rich were exempt, the tillage of the peasant paid tithe. Tithes were farmed and sold by auction, and the collectors often accepted bonds from the peasant, whose estate would be seized if he failed to pay the interest on the bonds.

The oppression of tithes

Ireland in poverty.

During the eighteenth century, therefore, Ireland was poverty-stricken. The population was growing rapidly, increasing from just over a million in 1695 to over four millions in 1788, and to nearly six millions in 1813. The output of the country did not keep pace with the growth of the population, and the financial burdens of the country

were also increasing. Archbishop King remarked that "one-half of the people in Ireland eat neither bread or flesh for one half of the year, nor wear shoes or stockings."<sup>1</sup> There were frequent emigrations: after the Revolution 14,000 Catholics left the country, a further 20,000 people left Ireland within a year of the Act of 1698 against the wool trade; between 1725 and 1728 over 4,000 Irish people left for the West Indies, and in the first half of the eighteenth century no less than 200,000 made their way into the colonies.<sup>2</sup>

Within the country there was constant unrest. In 1720 Swift began to write the *Drapier Letters*; and in 1722, when Wood bought a contract from the English Government for issuing an unnecessarily large amount of copper coinage for Ireland, there was such an outcry that the Government had to cancel Wood's contract and provide him with a pension instead. In 1761 the Whiteboys in Munster and Leinster began an attack on enclosures and unjust rents and tithes: two years later the Oakboys in Ulster also attacked the payment of tithes.

Opposition  
to England

In 1755 Henry Grattan entered the Irish Parliament and led the demand for free trade and a free Parliament. The non-importation agreements of the American colonies completed the destruction of Irish trade, and by 1778 the Irish Government was bankrupt, and had to borrow 50,000 guineas from the Bank of England. The restrictions on Irish trade were then partially relaxed. This did not satisfy the Irish. Bands of volunteers began to be formed in 1779 in Ulster to resist possible French attacks, and by the end of the year 40,000 Volunteers had enlisted. The Irish then began to introduce non-importation leagues to exclude British goods from Ireland, and these agreements were soon adopted in almost every county, with the result that British exports to Ireland declined from £2,100,000 to £595,000. To avert a revolution the British Parliament withdrew the Irish trade restrictions in 1779. In 1778 the law preventing Catholics from holding long leases was also withdrawn.

Grattan and  
the effects  
of the  
American  
Revolution

The Volun-  
teers

<sup>1</sup> A. E. Murray, *Commercial Relations between England and Ireland*, p. 93.

<sup>2</sup> O'Brien, *Econ. Hist. of Ireland in Eighteenth Century*, p. 17.

Free trade  
granted,  
1779,

and a free  
Parliament  
meets, 1782

Prosperity  
of Ireland,  
1782-93

Pitt's com-  
mercial pro-  
positions,  
1785

The out-  
break of  
war with  
France, 1793,

The grant of free trade did not pacify the Irish: it was a grant of the English Parliament and what England gave she could also withdraw. Grattan therefore continued his agitation for a free Parliament. In this he was supported by the Volunteers, who now numbered 80,000, and who were at present loyal to England. In 1782 Britain abandoned her legislative supremacy over Ireland, and Ireland's first free Parliament met. Ireland was, however, still without responsible government, for the central administration in Dublin was both appointed and controlled by the English Government, and was not dependent on the support of the Irish Parliament.

Ireland enjoyed a brief period of prosperity. In 1784 an Irish Corn Law was passed, placing a bounty on the export of Irish corn, and imposing duties on the import of foreign corn, when its price was less than 30s per quarter. This was followed by a considerable development of Irish tillage. Factories were rebuilt, corn-mills were brought back into use, the amount of woollen cloth exported increased from 9,000 yards in 1780 to 876,000 yards in 1786. The fishing and linen industries were also prosperous. The total export trade increased by 1782 to thirty-two times what it was in 1704, but by 1796 it was eighty-eight times its amount in 1704.<sup>1</sup> In 1785 Pitt introduced his scheme to lower the rates levied upon Irish goods entering Britain to the level of those levied when entering Ireland from Britain. The scheme also provided for the balancing of the Irish budget and for the utilisation of any surplus for imperial defence. The proposals, having been passed by the Irish Parliament, were modified by the English Parliament, so that they became unacceptable to the Irish and the scheme was abandoned. In 1793 Catholics were allowed to vote, but not to sit in Parliament or hold office.

The outbreak of war with France was a disaster for Ireland, and made the Irish problem more serious for Pitt's Government. The agitation against English power was taken up by Wolfe Tone, who organised the United Irishmen in 1791, an organisation which aimed to include both Catholics

<sup>1</sup> Murray, *op. cit.*, p. 272.

and Protestants The Irish Parliament at first loyally contributed to the cost of the war, but the strain upon the country's slender resources soon became apparent The annual average expenditure on military forces and supplies rose from £585,000 in 1782-92 to over £2,032,000 in 1797, and to £4,596,000 in 1800 The National Debt rose from £2,251,000 in 1793 to £28,551,000 in 1801. The vacillation of Pitt brought Ireland to the verge of revolution in 1795.

shows the  
loyalty of  
Ireland,

but also her  
inability to  
support the  
strain of  
war

To satisfy Portland, Pitt appointed Fitzwilliam to be Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. Even before his appointment Fitzwilliam had begun to negotiate with Grattan, and on his arrival in Ireland he began to displace the existing administration and to support the agitation for Catholic Emancipation. Pitt remained inactive and occupied with the French war, until the only alternative to granting Catholic Emancipation was the recall of the Lord-Lieutenant. In less than two months of his landing in Ireland, Fitzwilliam was recalled The Irish were furious, and the United Irishmen became a Catholic organisation aiming at destroying Protestant supremacy under various pretexts they began to arm themselves In 1797 the Irish broke out into open rebellion, and the danger to England was clearly serious, for French expeditions were sent to Ireland in 1797 and 1798 Pitt, who had had a Union in mind ever since the failure of his free trade proposals, determined to proceed with the scheme.

Dissatisfac-  
tion with  
the recall of  
Fitzwilliam

Rebellion in  
Ireland,  
1797.

In 1800 the Act of Union was passed by the Parliaments of both England and Ireland In Ireland its passage was secured by the energy of Castlereagh, the compensation of borough-owners and the liberal distribution of favours Twenty new Irish and five new English peers were created as rewards for support; places and pensions were generously granted and a very small amount of money bribery was used The Irish had been warned that England would not consent to concessions to the Catholics unless the Union were first carried, and though no definite promises were given, the Catholics were led to expect that Catholic Emancipation would follow the passing of the Act of Union

The Act of  
Union

By the Act of Union there was to be complete free trade—

Its provisions

a concession far less valuable to Ireland than it had been to Scotland. Ireland was to be represented in the House of Lords by twenty-eight peers and in the House of Commons by 100 members. Each country was to be responsible for the payment of the interest on its own national debt, and Ireland and the United Kingdom were to contribute to the revenue in the proportion of two to seventeen. Any future debt incurred was to be regarded as a joint debt of Britain and Ireland.<sup>1</sup>

do not  
satisfy Irish  
opinion.

The Irish members took their seats in 1801. Pitt attempted to secure Catholic Emancipation for Ireland; the King refused to consider his proposals and Pitt resigned. The fact that the disabilities of the Catholics were retained and that no attempt was made to remove the injustices of the Irish land system largely explain the continued hostility of the Irish to England in the nineteenth century.

<sup>1</sup> Grant-Robertson, *Select Statutes*, p. 283.

## CHAPTER X

### THE BRITISH EMPIRE, 1783-1815

THE American Revolution was a severe shock to the First British Empire, and helped to bring about a great change in imperial policy. After the Treaty of Versailles a wave of depression<sup>1</sup> swept over the country; the value of colonies was doubted, further settlement was discouraged, and the general opinion was that colonies were like the fruit of trees which gradually grew to maturity and then inevitably fell from the parent stock. The management of the colonies was moved from Department to Department: in 1782 the Board of Trade and the Secretaryship of State for the Colonies were dissolved and the colonies placed under the control of the Home Secretary: a new Committee of the Privy Council for Trade and Plantations was established two years later; in 1794 the colonies were placed under the control of the Secretary of State for War, and in 1801 the Colonial and War Departments were united. The opinion of John Stuart Mill was that "England derives little advantage except in prestige from her dependencies and the little she does derive is quite outweighed by the expense they cost her and the dissemination they necessitate of her naval and military force"<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless in spite of the opposition of public opinion, between 1783 and 1815 there was a considerable development of British power in Canada, a great extension of British territory and authority in India, the beginning of British colonisation in Australia, and additions by conquest in various parts of the world.

Popular opposition to colonial enterprise after 1783

does not prevent imperial development.

<sup>1</sup> Shelburne wrote. "The moment that the independence of America is agreed to by our Government, the sun of Great Britain is set, and we shall no longer be a powerful or respectable people" Fitzmaurice, *Life of Shelburne*, vol II, p 14. Cited from Coupland, *The Amer. Revol and British Emp*, p 14

<sup>2</sup> L C A Knowles, *Ind and Comm Revolutions in Gt Brit*, p 320

The loss of the American colonies is a blow to Mercantilism

Ultimately the loss of the American colonies had a beneficial effect on colonial policy. Nearly fifty years later Huskisson wrote. "However the attempt at taxation may have contributed somewhat to hasten the explosion, the train had long been laid in the severe and exasperating efforts of this country to enforce, with inopportune and increasing vigour, the strictest and most annoying regulations of our colonial and Navigation Code."<sup>1</sup> Though his view of the causes of the Revolution is open to doubt, yet it shows how statesmen had begun to realise the failure of an Empire in which the economic interests of the Mother Country were paramount.

and facilitates the adoption of a new imperial policy

The disruption of the First Empire discouraged Great Britain from making any attempt to recompense herself for her losses by new acquisitions, and when a new wave of colonial development set in, new ideas of Empire were already gaining currency. The Second Empire was to be based not on the economic and political subjection, but on the political co-operation and commercial equality of the colony. Even before 1815 some statesmen had glimpses of that Empire. Chatham drafted a scheme of imperial representation in Parliament, and was prepared to recognise Congress as a legislative body with the right of voting taxes for imperial purposes.<sup>2</sup> His son also had novel ideas of Empire, for in his India Bill in 1784 he urged the attempt "to render that connection a blessing to the native Indians"

The situation in Canada is specially favourable to imperial experiments.

The situation which arose in Canada also assisted in the development of new imperial ideas. In spite of the relatively small economic value which Canada at the moment possessed, England could ill afford to lose that colony, for the newly separated American States were anxious to make Canada "the fourteenth State". The need for equitable treatment was therefore more immediate in Canada than elsewhere, and it was in her relations with Canada that England first evolved a new attitude towards the problem of Empire. There the problem was not merely to develop

<sup>1</sup> Coupland, *Amer Revol and Brit Emp*, p 175

<sup>2</sup> See "Chatham and Repres of Colonies in Imp. Parl," B Williams, *Eng Hist. Rev*, October, 1907.

a prosperous colony, but also "to convert the Canadians gradually into British citizens"<sup>1</sup> In 1791 Dorchester pointed out that the preservation of Canada "requires that we should leave as little for them to gain by a separation as possible," and Pitt urged his contemporaries to "give Canada a free constitution in the British sense of the word . . . as much as possible of a constitution, deservedly the glory and happiness of those who toil under it and the model and envy of the world, should be extended to all our dependencies"<sup>2</sup> Though such dim foreshadowings of a new outlook on imperial relations occasionally appeared, the new imperial policy did not gain widespread support until Lord Durham published his report in 1839, and even then a great deal of opposition in England had to be overcome before it was accepted. The old attitude towards Empire died slowly, and the effect of the American Revolution on public opinion exerted itself very gradually

The progress of this new imperial policy was facilitated by the decline of Mercantilism, which had greatly influenced the policy of the First Empire. The doctrines of Adam Smith had won the support of William Pitt. Contrary to the expectations of the orthodox economists, it was found that, when America was politically independent of England, her trade with Britain increased instead of decreased. The problem of trade between America and the West Indies had to be reconsidered, and although, in spite of the efforts of Pitt, the Mercantilists succeeded until 1793 in maintaining the prohibition of that trade,<sup>3</sup> the war with France caused it to be partly freed from restriction. The British fleet was too fully occupied in the conflict with Napoleon to enforce her Commercial Code, and the shrinkage of her European markets made it all the more necessary to open up other channels to her merchants.<sup>4</sup> Free Trade was established

Restrictions  
on colonial  
trade reduced

<sup>1</sup> Lucas, *Lord Durham's Report*, vol. 1, p. 27

<sup>2</sup> Coupland, *Amer. Revol. and Brit. Emp.*, p. 278

<sup>3</sup> *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, July, 1916. H. C. Bell, *Brit. Comm. Policy in West Indies*, 1783-93

<sup>4</sup> For example, Napoleon's control of the Baltic made it necessary for England to find a new source of supply for timber. Before the War, from 1788-92, England imported 219,000 loads of timber from the Baltic, but from 1808-12 she imported thence only 73,000 loads.



very gradually, and had few adherents during the period before 1815, but its influence upon economic thought had definitely begun. This gradual decline of Mercantilist ideas laid the foundation for a new attitude towards Empire—for an attitude not having trade as its sole motive.

Canada after  
1763.

While these changes in imperial ideas were being effected, a steady development of the various parts of the Empire was taking place. When Canada was ceded to England by France in 1763, her population of 78,000 people<sup>1</sup> consisted chiefly of French Catholics: she was then very capably governed in turn by Carleton and Murray. In 1774 the passing of the Quebec Act gave satisfaction to the Canadians.

The Quebec  
Act.

This Act restored French Law in its entirety in civil cases, whilst retaining English Law in criminal suits: there was to be toleration for the Catholics, the Roman Catholic clergy were secured in their estates, and the government of a Governor and a nominated Council was established. There was no elected Assembly, since this would have been a Catholic body, which England was not yet prepared to allow. The Act was interpreted by the Americans as an attempt to arouse Canadian sympathy against them. This view seemed to be confirmed by the fact that the land between the rivers Ohio and Mississippi, south of the Lakes, was by this Act recognised as being part of Canada; this appeared to the American as a deliberate attempt to prevent his expansion westwards. The United States therefore hoped Canada would join in the revolt against England; but though Canada had not as yet any great affection for England, she had still less for the New England colonies, and she was at least grateful to the English Government for the Quebec Act. Canada declined to enter the war; the States therefore determined to conquer her, but the attempt failed.

The American  
revolt.

The success of the Americans against England eventually led to the abandoning of the attempt to include the Middle West in Canada. The attack on Canada left a deep-seated

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She had therefore to introduce preferences to imperial timber, with the result that imports rose from 2,660 to 120,000 loads during the same period (Knowles, *Econ. Devel. of Overseas Emp.*, vol. II., p. 164).

<sup>1</sup> W. L. Grant, *Hist. of Canada*, p. 157.





animosity towards America and a greater respect for England and the protection she would provide in time of need. The American Revolution had, however, a much more important effect in that it drove 60,000 Loyalists into Canada. They received grants of 200 acres per family, provisions, seeds, and tools from the English Government in recognition of their faithful service during the war. Of these Loyalists, 28,000 settled in New Brunswick, which in 1784 was recognised by England as a separate province with its capital at St. John. Other Loyalists established themselves in Cape Breton Island, but some 10,000 made their way to the land west of the French-populated province of Canada, in the district now known as Ontario. Here was a difficult problem for the Government: a loyal French Catholic colony to which self-government had been denied, now received as its neighbour a Protestant English settlement anxious for political autonomy. To meet this problem the Constitutional Act was passed in 1791. This Act recognised the separation of Upper from Lower Canada, and established a Governor in Lower Canada and a Lieutenant-Governor in Upper Canada, each was to have its own Executive, a Legislative Council and elected Assembly. In Upper Canada (Ontario) English Law was administered, and in Lower Canada (Quebec) French Law was left undisturbed.

The Loyalists  
in Canada

The Consti-  
tutional Act

This was an honest and enlightened attempt to solve existing difficulties: arbitrary restrictions and efforts to provide for the economic domination of England were to a large extent avoided. Simcoe, the first Governor of Upper Canada, wrote to the Duke of Portland of "the great experiment," expressing the hope that "the enjoyment of the principles and forms of the British Constitution internally and a common interest and union externally" might "attach for ages this commanding province to the side of Great Britain."<sup>1</sup>

Yet the wisdom of separating the two provinces was questioned at the time by Fox, and is still open to doubt. Fox condemned the separation on the ground that it would maintain opposition between French and English colonists,

<sup>1</sup> *Can. Const. Doct.*, 1791-1818, pp. 196-204. Coupland, *Amer. Revol. and Brit. Emp.*, p. 291.

and prevent the two races from coalescing. That social opposition played a considerable part in the early stages of Canadian history is evident, but that conditions would have been better if the two provinces had remained united is very doubtful.

Disputes and  
differences  
between the  
two prov-  
inces.

The difference between the two provinces was greater than a mere racial one: it was a fundamental difference in social structure and in character. The French colonies had been established and controlled by the State; they had been maintained under a rigid, militaristic discipline, and they had developed a strongly conservative loyalty to the King. On the other hand, the English, though strongly Loyalist, were liberal in mind, and possessed the strongest possible enthusiasm for freedom and self-government. The French had reproduced in Canada the feudal society of the home country, with its seignorial organisation: the English had established themselves on small farms, where they maintained a sturdy independence. The French habitants' virtues were dogged tenacity and uninventive industry: that of the English was initiative. Hence the French "were inferior in business methods and in acquiring and creating wealth, and were therefore liable to exploitation by clever middlemen of English race."<sup>1</sup> The separation of the two provinces left Upper Canada without a port. Customs-duties levied at Montreal on imported goods, even if intended for use in Ontario, were credited to the Treasury of the Lower Province, to the disadvantage of her neighbour. By the Canada Trade Act (1822), provision was made for Upper Canada to receive a fifth of the customs levied and to share in fixing the amount to be paid. The Councils, which the Constitutional Act created, rapidly became close corporations, political power fell into the hands of small cliques in each province, and the majority of the inhabitants were excluded from political activity. Often this arose from a genuine attempt of honest-minded but Conservative English Governors, like Simcoe, to keep power vested in those they considered fit and proper people to wield it. Sometimes, more particularly in Lower Canada, the influence of these cliques

<sup>1</sup> Knowles, *Econ. Devel. of Overseas Emp.*, vol. III., p. 183.

was based on mere venality. There developed, therefore, in both provinces a considerable agitation for responsible government, so that the Councils should be dependent upon the elected Assemblies. This agitation was more violent in Lower Canada, where it was combined with racial hostility, especially when the province fell under the control of so tactless a Governor as Sir James Craig (recalled in 1811), who considered the French subjects as national enemies. The Councils and ruling classes tended to become more and more dominated by English people, English ideas and English interests, while the Assembly was from the outset predominantly French. A French Canadian press was begun and the Nationalist paper, *Le Canadien*, led a vigorous attack on the Government. Yet "the struggle at this time was not so much a race conflict as a squabble between the Executive and the Legislature."<sup>1</sup> So blind did the opposition to the Executive become that even wise measures were needlessly obstructed and the work of government brought to a standstill.

A further grievance under the Constitutional Act was the special privileges of the Churches. That Act prescribed that in Upper Canada one-seventh of all land should be set aside for the maintenance of a Protestant clergy: this provision became a burden on the people, since the clergy were too few to supply the spiritual needs of the population, and were quite unable to undertake the proper cultivation of their land. The grievance became all the more oppressive when an attempt was made to secure this land for the Church of England, the weakest denomination in Upper Canada, whereas the Act of 1791 had allotted it merely to a Protestant clergy. In New Brunswick, also, there was considerable opposition to the privilege of the Church of England. The opposition became much more boisterous later when this attempt by the Anglicans to monopolise the Clergy Reserves was more vigorously pressed by Bishop Strachan of Toronto.

The privileges of the Church

In 1837 people in both Provinces broke out into unsuccessful revolt. In the next year Lord Durham was sent out as

<sup>1</sup> Lucas, *Lord Durham's Report*, vol. 1, p. 35. This book should be consulted on the subject of Canadian difficulties in general.

The revolt  
of the Prov-  
inces and  
the Durham  
Report

Governor and prepared his Report, submitted to the Queen in 1839. This was followed by the Union of Upper and Lower Canada and the gradual grant of complete responsible government. The policy of Lord Durham's Report became the basis of the Second British Empire

Loyalty of  
the Cana-  
dians

The grievances of Canada, however, did not prevent her during the period before 1813 from showing sincere loyalty and rendering real service to England. In 1812 England's retaliation against Napoleon's Continental System, and her vigorous enforcements of her claim to search neutral vessels, led to war with the United States. The American army invaded the country in 1812. But while the English fleet was unsuccessful on the Great Lakes, the Canadians, especially those of Ontario, distinguished themselves by a heroic and costly defence of their country against the invasion. The Treaty of Ghent, which ended the war in 1814, left the territory of Canada unimpaired, her embitterment against America deepened and her attachment to England strengthened. The possibility of Canada becoming "the fourteenth State" had become very slight.

Prosperity of  
the Pro-  
vinces

Meanwhile both Provinces were making steady economic progress. The population of Lower Canada expanded from 78,000 in 1765 to 179,000 in 1790, and to 516,000 in 1825, and that of Upper Canada from 30,000 in 1790 to nearly 160,000 in 1825.<sup>1</sup> The timber trade of Lower Canada flourished and there was a great development of farming: and by 1801 Quebec was exporting furs to the value of £371,139.<sup>2</sup> Although Upper Canada was a new settlement, the hard-working colonists quickly cleared their lands, brought them into cultivation and rapidly established themselves as efficient and successful farmers. There was a gradual improvement in the standard of living. the first brick house appeared at Belleville in 1794; under the Governorship of Simcoe, roads were built, and by 1808 coaches were running between Kingston and Montreal. In addition, a large number of schools were founded and many churches were erected.

<sup>1</sup> Grant, *Hist. of Canada*, p. 157.

<sup>2</sup> Knowles, *Econ. Devel. of Overseas Emp.*, p. 201.

Yet at this time the Maritime Provinces formed the most important part of Canada. They were more accessible to English emigrants, their trade was more lucrative, they were reinforced by the immigration of 35,000 Loyalists and by successive settlements of Scotch Highlanders. They possessed a prosperous fishing community, a flourishing shipbuilding industry, a highly organised lumbering trade and an increasing business with the West Indies.

The Maritime Provinces

In Nova Scotia the lumbering trade flourished. By 1817 its population numbered 81,351 and exceeded that of Upper Canada.<sup>1</sup> The war with France brought importance and English money to Halifax, which was used as the chief naval station on the North American coast, it also increased trade with the West Indies in lumber and provisions, owing to the legal prohibition which still remained against the direct trade of the Islands with the United States. Political power there as in Canada was in the hands of a very limited number, yet so efficient and public-spirited were its rulers that there was as yet little opposition.

The Loyalist colonists of New Brunswick quickly turned their attention to the lumber trade and made it flourish, though forest fires were a frequent source of trouble. There was little political opposition, though the Assembly rarely ceased from its clamour against the privileges of the Church of England. The demand for responsible Government in the colony did not arise until later.

To the North of the Canadian Provinces lay the territory of the Hudson Bay Company. There had never been any serious attempt at settlement in this inhospitable region the Company was interested solely in trade. "Factories" were established at Nelson, Churchill and elsewhere on the Bay, and thither the Indians went with their furs. During the eighteenth century the Company was distracted by an attempt of interlopers to invade its trading monopoly, these eventually formed themselves into the North-West Fur-Trading Company, with its headquarters at Montreal. Their opposition lasted until the union of the two Companies in 1821.

The territory of the Hudson Bay Co

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 169 n



Exploration  
of the West.

Little was known of the Rockies and the territory of the West, but during this period explorations were made which were the prelude to the establishing of British power in the Northern Pacific. The western coast of Canada was first viewed, not by explorers from the interior, but by Captain Cook sailing up the Pacific. In 1788 a settlement was made at Nooka Sound in Vancouver Island with the object of developing the fur trade with China. Two years later the Spanish attempted to eject the new settlers, but the English Government forced Spain to admit the claim of the English colonists. In 1792 Vancouver conducted his important voyage of discovery along the Canadian Pacific coast. In the same year Alexander Mackenzie, one of the Scotch interloping rivals of the Hudson Bay Company, successfully completed a journey from the interior to the Pacific Coast. In 1802 the settlement of the River Columbia was proposed, and three years later the Hudson Bay Company despatched Fraser to open up trade with the Indians west of the Rockies. In 1811 Lord Selkirk led a band of hardy Scotsmen into the district which now forms the Province of Manitoba, and established the Red River Settlement; but his project led to great disappointment, and he himself was ruined. Yet his settlement remained in spite of its difficulties.

Boundary  
disputes.

Although a good deal of valuable exploratory work had been done, there was little attempt at colonisation. The journeys were inspired by fur traders anxious to extend their spheres of business; they were therefore by nature opposed to the permanent settlement of colonists, whose first task would be to make clearings and so reduce the scope of trappers. Nevertheless frequent boundary disputes indicated that the possibilities of the future were not entirely forgotten. Contention quickly followed the Peace of 1783 as to the boundary between Nova Scotia and the United States of America. In 1803, when the United States bought Louisiana from France, there arose a dispute as to the boundary dividing it from Canada between the Mississippi and the Rockies. The penetration of Clarke and Lewis, both Americans, to the Columbia River in 1805 laid the basis

for the dispute regarding the boundary west of the Rockies. And in 1812 trouble arose as to the boundary between New Brunswick and Maine. Thus before 1815 exploration had paved the way for settlement of the West though little had yet been undertaken, and an anxiety for boundaries indicated the slow awakening of both the United States of America and England—both were as yet thinking chiefly of the rights of its fur traders—to the needs of future generations.

In the North Atlantic the Bermudas and Bahamas were British colonies. The Bermudas had been settled in 1612, had developed a profitable trade in tobacco with Great Britain and in 1780 supported a population of 15,000 people. In addition, they formed a useful port-of-call for vessels trading between the West Indies and the North American mainland. The Bahamas had also been settled during the first half of the seventeenth century: their development was slow, though the introduction of the cotton industry by the American Loyalists after the American Revolution brought them fresh prosperity.

British possessions in the Atlantic

In the West Indies the chief British islands were Barbados, settled in 1624; St Christopher (1626); Nevis (1628); Antigua and Montserrat, which had been colonised from St. Christopher in 1632; the Virgin Islands (1635) and Jamaica, which had been conquered from the Spaniards in 1655. The Treaty of Utrecht placed St Kitts, previously shared by the English and the French, entirely in British hands. At the close of the Seven Years' War Great Britain acquired Grenada, St Vincent, Dominica and Tobago from France, but Tobago was restored by the Peace of Versailles in 1783, and was a second time ceded to England in 1815. The Peace Treaty of 1815 added St. Lucia, with its excellent harbour, to the British possessions, and also British Guiana in South America: Trinidad, which had been conquered from the Dutch in 1797, was retained.

and in the West Indies

The West Indies occupied a place of supreme importance in the first British Empire. Their importance was partly strategic, for they provided ports for the fleet operating in the Atlantic, and bases for attack on the enemy colonies or on Spanish buccaneers. Each great conflict of the

The importance of the West Indies (a) as sources of supply.

century, therefore, ensured for the West Indies considerable maritime activity; and the possession of the Islands was constantly at stake in these struggles. The importance of the Islands was also partly economic. They produced tropical goods, which under the old Colonial System were "enumerated" for English use: had these Islands not been in British possession, it would have been necessary for these goods to be bought from foreign nations, increasing Britain's indebtedness to them and affecting her balance of trade adversely. The staple product was sugar, exported in large quantities especially from Barbados and Jamaica. In 1734 the Board of Trade estimated the annual output of sugar at 1,200,000 cwts.<sup>1</sup> The West Indies exported to England and New England a large quantity of rum. In addition, coffee and cocoa were cultivated in Grenada; cotton in Tobago; tobacco in St. Kitts, as well as some quantity of indigo,<sup>2</sup> ginger, pepper and hides. British imports from the West Indies in 1792 formed 20 per cent., and in 1800 28 per cent., of the total imports, a higher percentage than was supplied by any other country.<sup>3</sup> In 1772 their value was estimated at £3,000,000, and in 1788 at £4,000,000.<sup>4</sup>

(b) as British market,

The West Indies were an extremely important market for exports of British goods. They purchased annually from England produce to the value of a further £500,000.<sup>5</sup> England's exports to the West Indies in 1792 formed 11 per cent., and in 1800 10 per cent., of her total.<sup>6</sup> In 1734 these exports were valued annually at £240,000,<sup>7</sup> in 1748 at £734,000,<sup>8</sup> in 1766 at £1,060,000,<sup>9</sup> and in 1788 at £1,600,000.<sup>10</sup> So that of the whole British import and export trade, the West Indies accounted for about one quarter.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Brisco, *Econ. Policy of Walpole*

<sup>2</sup> In 1687-8, 168,807 lbs of indigo was exported from British West Indies (Beer, *Old Colonial System*, p. 136)

<sup>3</sup> Mahan, *Influence of Sea Power on Fr. Revol.*, vol. II, p. 252

<sup>4</sup> *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, 1916, p. 440 H. C. Bell, *Brit. Comm. Pol. in West Indies*, 1783-93. <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 430.

<sup>6</sup> Mahan, *Influence of Sea Power on Fr. Revol.*, vol. II, p. 252

<sup>7</sup> Brisco, *Econ. Policy of Walpole*, p. 204

<sup>8</sup> *Camb. Hist. of Brit. Emp.*, vol. I, p. 535

<sup>9</sup> Beer, *Brit. Colon. Policy*, 1754-56, p. 137.

<sup>10</sup> *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, 1916, p. 440.

<sup>11</sup> Mahan, *Influence of Sea Power on Fr. Revol.*, vol. I, p. 109.

Until the war with America a large trade was exploited, ships laden with British goods sailing to North America, selling their cargoes, reloading with American goods for the Indies and returning again to England with West Indian products. Thus a considerable trade was maintained in the conveyance of fish, lumber and flour from Canada, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. After the outbreak of war with the American colonies the trade between the Thirteen Colonies and the Indies was prohibited, but this only increased the direct traffic between the West Indies and Ireland and England. After the Peace Treaty of Versailles, Pitt proposed to permit free intercourse between the Indies and America, but to this the English Parliament would not agree, and the trade remained proscribed by the Navigation Acts. By the Order in Council of 1783 the Indies were allowed to export to the United States rum, sugar, molasses, coffee and ginger, and to import thence lumber, flour, grain, vegetables and livestock, but not those goods which either England herself or Ireland could supply—meat, dairy produce and fish. The whole trade had to be carried in British or colonial ships. The independence of the American colonies, therefore, so far from injuring English trade with the West Indies, actually increased it by 1788 to the extent of about 25 per cent, when it occupied 600 ships<sup>1</sup>. After the outbreak of war with France in 1793, England was obliged to allow trade between America and the West Indies, and in 1806 legal sanction with certain restrictions was given to this business.

(c) as employers of British shipping,

Throughout the eighteenth century the French and the Spanish, both of whom had considerable possessions in the West, were Britain's commercial rivals. Both sought to preserve the trade of their colonies for themselves, and the British West Indies provided a useful base for English attacks upon the commercial monopoly of these rivals. British ships did a very lucrative trade in supplying the Spanish mines in South America with slave labour, using Jamaica as their centre. There was also a considerable trade done between the American Colonies and the French

(d) as naval bases,

<sup>1</sup> *Eng Hist Rev*, 1916, p. 436.

West Indies, exchanging rum and molasses for fish, lumber and provisions: some of this trade passed through British West Indian ports, for the English Government officially frowned on, and in time of war definitely prohibited, this business.

(s) for the variety of the West Indian trade

The trade of the West Indies was outstandingly important for other reasons than its mere volume. It served a number of interests: it employed a large number of British grocers, and provided work for numerous English refineries.<sup>1</sup> The West Indies were also either directly or indirectly the chief market of the slave-traders. West Indian enterprise was controlled by English planters and was dependent on English capital, of which £60,000,000 had been invested in the islands.<sup>2</sup> Consequently West Indian interests were well supported whenever they were questioned in England, and in Parliament the influence of the planters and their adherents was always one to be reckoned with. Lastly, in a century when by far the greater part of England's revenue was produced by indirect taxation, the West Indies had the distinction of supplying England with three-quarters of a million pounds of her income.<sup>3</sup>

The slavery problem.

There was, however, one great cause for constant anxiety in the West Indies—the problem of the slave population. In Barbados in 1773 there were only 18,000 white people, whilst there were 68,000 slaves, and in Jamaica in 1800 there were only 30,000 white people and 300,000 slaves. Burke estimated the population of the British West Indies at 90,000 white people and 230,000 slaves.<sup>4</sup> At first there were large numbers of white as well as negro slaves, but since the latter were much better workers in the tropical climate, and since they served for life instead of for four years, as was usually the case with whites, the number of white slaves steadily decreased and that of negroes steadily increased.

<sup>1</sup> In England and Scotland there were not less than 120 refineries, employing 1,800 people, there were eighty distilleries in London alone (Pitman, *Devel. of W. Indies*, 1700-63, p. 340)

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 430

<sup>3</sup> *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, 1916, p. 430.

<sup>4</sup> Lucas, *Hist. Geog. of Brit. Colonies*, p. 69. More detailed statistics will be found in Pitman, *Devel. of W. Indies*, 1700-63, Appendix I.

Slave risings were frequent, especially when the influence of the French Revolution began to be felt in the Islands

In fact, by 1783 the West Indies had passed their zenith, and by 1815 decline had palpably set in. The abolition of the slave trade in 1807 and the emancipation of the slaves in 1833 were severe blows to the planters, for the compensation given, when the latter step was taken, represented only about one-third of the value of the slaves. Negro slaves, though generally excellent workers, were not gifted with any originality or initiative, and progress in the plantations was slow: the French islands, especially Gaudeloupe and Martinique, were more efficiently managed, and their competition with the English steadily became more effective. This was particularly severe after 1783, when, with the independence of the American colonies, the trade between the British West Indies and the mainland became prohibited, and when the Americans were at liberty to buy their goods in the cheapest market. When later in the nineteenth century England adopted Free Trade, the competition of foreign countries was almost the final blow to the West Indies. In the nineteenth century the relative value of sugar, the staple product of the Islands, steadily declined. Beet sugar grown in Europe and subsidised by European Governments began to compete with the cane sugar of the West Indies. Thus the supreme importance of the Indies in the British Empire had been slowly diminished, and prosperity did not return to the Islands until the close of the nineteenth century: the development of scientific cultivation, England's restriction of the importation of foreign sugar, the opening of the Panama Canal, and the introduction of fresh crops made possible a partial revival of their former importance.

The history of the West Indies is connected with that of Africa, for British settlements in Africa were chiefly slave-trading stations. Towards the close of the eighteenth century slaves were being shipped from Africa at the rate of 74,000 each year, 38,000 of whom were taken by English dealers.<sup>1</sup> Shortly after the Restoration of Charles II to

<sup>1</sup> Rose, *Life of William Pitt*, vol. 1, p. 455

the English throne, factories were founded on the Gambia River, along the Gold Coast and in Sierra Leone. These were flourishing centres of the lucrative slave trade until its abolition, and in the Seven Years' War attempts were made by Great Britain to increase her command of the trade by taking the French stations on the Senegal River and in Goree. At the Peace of Paris the forts on the Senegal were retained, but Goree was restored to France. The exploration of the Upper Niger by Mungo Park in 1796 is worthy of note as an attempt by English people to investigate the interior.

(b) Sierra  
Leone,

Another British colony, Sierra Leone, was established in Africa by emancipated negroes in 1772 and 1791. In 1772 the decision of Lord Mansfield that slaves when landed in England automatically became free, released 14,000 negroes then in England. A society was formed for their relief and a colony was founded in Sierra Leone. This experiment failed, but a similar venture was made in 1791 with more success, and after the prohibition of the slave trade in 1807 the colony was reinforced by slaves who were discovered by British warships while being illegally transported to the Indies. The motive of these settlements is more interesting than the history of the colony itself, for in the nineteenth century philanthropic fervour played a considerable part in the building of the Empire.

(c) Cape  
Colony

In 1795, after Holland had taken the side of France against England, the Dutch colony at the Cape was seized. It was restored in 1802, was reoccupied by British forces in 1806, and was finally annexed in 1814. This colony was beginning to acquire some share of prosperity by the export of grain and wines, but its annexation by England was dictated largely by military considerations, for it was to serve as a naval base for the fleet operating in Eastern waters and as a link in England's communication with her Empire in the Far East. There were in the colony about 15,000 white inhabitants,<sup>1</sup> and it bristled with problems for the future. The Dutch colonists had begun to push inland from the Cape, dominating the natives where they went, and

<sup>1</sup> Newton and Ewing, *Brit. Empire since 1783*, p. 78.

developing a sturdy independence and a latent suspicion of colonial government. But in addition to the problem of the Dutch, future generations would have to deal with the difficulties presented by the steady advance from the interior of tribes of Kaffirs, for with these the English authorities had already come into conflict by 1811. The land itself was fertile, and the climate favourable for European settlement, but the problems of government would tax all the resources of the best imperial statesmen.<sup>1</sup>

During the eighteenth century British power was also firmly established in India. There the Mogul Empire had been founded by Baber the Turk, the contemporary of Henry VIII, and established by Akbar, the contemporary of Elizabeth. The British East India Company had been founded and granted a Royal charter by Elizabeth in 1601, its initial capital being only £30,000. Its interest then lay chiefly in the Spice Islands, where Dutch influence was gradually superseding that of Portugal. But the opposition of the Dutch and Portuguese to the invasion of their commercial monopoly by the English led the English to turn their attention to the mainland of India. The British had in India merely a few trading stations on territory leased from native powers, no British citizens other than those employed by the Company were allowed to reside there, and there was no attempt either to found colonies or to interfere in Indian politics. The competition of the French had to be faced, but this had not yet become very serious.

British  
settlements  
in India

In the eighteenth century fundamental changes began in India. The Mogul Emperors were Mahomedans, whilst their subjects were mainly Hindus: their authority had never been securely established in Central India and had rarely been effective in the South. With the deterioration of the reigning house, especially after the death of Aurungzebe in 1707, and the pressure of successive waves of Persian and Afghan invaders from the North and North-West, their power began rapidly to disappear. As the strength of the Central Government declined, the Empire began to break up into many principalities, and the Emperor's

The disinte-  
gration of  
the Mogul  
Empire

<sup>1</sup> See De Kock, *Econ. Hist. of S. Africa*



former subordinate rulers gradually became completely independent. The chief of the Indian princes were the Nawabs of Bengal, of the Circars, of the Carnatic, of Mysore, and the Nizam of Haidarabad; across the centre of the continent there arose a group of states ruled by the Mahratta chiefs, the former leaders of mere robber tribes.

The opposi-  
tion of the  
French,

led by Du-  
pleix,

is defeated  
by Clive.

At this juncture the French began to play a vigorous part on the scene. In 1740 Dupleix, who had been in the service of the French East India Company for twenty years, and who had already been made Governor of Chandernagore, was appointed Governor of Pondicherry, the chief French station in India. It was his policy to secure political power as well as commercial prosperity, and he therefore prepared to turn to account the disunion and weakness of Indian States. He sought to make alliances with native princes, to intervene in their disputes, to establish on provincial thrones princes favourable to France and to maintain them with forces of native troops, commanded by French officers and supplied with French equipment. Carefully reforming the finances and administration of the French Company, strongly fortifying Pondicherry and building up a powerful French force, Dupleix took advantage of the declaration of war by France on England in 1744 to begin hostilities. Madras was taken, but was restored by the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle. Undismayed, Dupleix, in 1748, took the opportunity offered by disputed successions to the thrones of the Carnatic and the Nizam to secure the accession of native princes favourable to himself and dependent on French support. The prestige of France was established and two provinces in the South were virtually under French control.

Clive, a clerk of the British East India Company, with a mere handful of just over 500 ill-trained men, not merely succeeded in capturing Arcot, the capital of the Nizam, but in successfully defending it for fifty days. This had the effect of forcing the French to detach their forces from Trichinopoly, where Mahomed Ally, the claimant to the Carnatic who had the favour of the English Company, was closely besieged; and eventually Mahomed Ally was proclaimed Nawab and his rival was slain. The French Govern-

ment, disapproving of Dupleix's energetic action, had him recalled in 1754 Bussy, the French general operating in the territory of the Circars, was also withdrawn from his activities by the French commander, Lally, and Lally himself was defeated at Wandewash by Eyre Coote in 1760. The power of France in Southern India was broken, and the Carnatic and the Nizam came under the influence of Britain: the French factory at Pondicherry passed into British hands. England's success had been due to the inability of the French to appreciate the merit of Dupleix's policy, to the activity of the British fleet and the energy and ability of Clive.

Meanwhile British power was being consolidated in Bengal. Friction between Surajah Dowlah, the Nawab of Bengal, and the English authorities in Calcutta, led to the "Black Hole", Clive, just returning from England, defeated the Nawab at Plassey in 1757 and deposed him in favour of Mir Jaffier, a British satellite. The French station of Chandernagore was also captured, though at the Peace of Paris both this and the factory at Pondicherry were restored.

Clive deposes the Nawab of Bengal

The Nawab of Bengal was obliged to make certain payments to the Company in return for British protection and assistance; and when Mir Jaffier fell into arrears he was deposed in favour of Mir Kassim, his son-in-law. Mir Kassim was eventually driven into rebellion by English oppression, and he was joined by the Vizier of Oudh and the Mogul Emperor, who had been driven from his capital at Delhi by the Mahrattas, and was then residing in Oudh. The rebels were defeated at Buxar in 1764 and forced to make peace. By the terms of this treaty Oudh entered into an alliance with the British, the collection of the taxes of Bengal was transferred to the Company, who paid to the Nawab a fixed sum for his maintenance. The Mogul Emperor became a British dependent, two districts in Oudh were created into an imperial territory for his residence, and an income of £300,000 was assigned to him by the British East India Company out of the revenues collected from Bengal. The territory of the Northern Circars, which had been ceded by the Nizam to Bussy, the French

and establishes British power in Bengal

general, for the upkeep of his army, and which had been seized by Clive, was formally transferred to the Company.

The unsatisfactory relation of the Company to the Government

Thus the position of the Company had completely changed, for it was now possessed of great political, as well as commercial, power. But this position was wholly unsatisfactory. The relations of the Company to the British Government were inequitable: although the Government allowed the Company to acquire political authority and assisted it with naval forces, it steadily declined to be responsible for the Company's actions or to undertake any share in the management of Indian affairs. After the Settlement of 1765, however, by demanding an annual payment of £400,000, it accepted the view that the Company was to make a profit from its control of the finances of Bengal. So long as it had been merely a trading concern, the Company had prospered. for in 1740 it had a capital of about £3,000,000 and had paid a dividend of 7 per cent. for several years. It had brought from India large supplies of pepper, tea, coffee, spices, silk and cotton goods, ebony and fine woods, and had exported to it the precious metals, lead, iron, gums, and clothes. By 1744 the Company was importing goods to the value of nearly £2,000,000, and exporting goods to the value of £231,000 and bullion to the value of £458,000 annually.<sup>1</sup> But when the Company began to interfere in Indian politics and to undertake responsibilities for the internal administration of the country, it was reduced to the verge of bankruptcy. The Company was unable to make its payments to the Government, and these ceased in 1770, and it could not maintain an adequate standard of justice in its management of Indian affairs. The Company could not conduct its administration efficiently and at the same time return a handsome dividend to its shareholders.

and to the Indian authorities.

If the relation of the Company to the Government was unsatisfactory, its position in India was anomalous. The Governor of Bengal had under his control 26,000,000 people, commanded 30,000 troops, and administered a revenue of £4,000,000,<sup>2</sup> yet he was a mere servant of the Company,

<sup>1</sup> Brisco, *Econ. Policy of Walpole*, pp. 190 and 191.

<sup>2</sup> Woodward, *Expansion of British Emp.*, p. 231

with no official political position. Though the finances of Bengal were under British management, the nominal authority of the Nawab was left intact, the collection and administration of the revenues were left to native officials under English supervisors and the power of native local authorities was not curtailed. When temptation was constant and control remote and ineffective, the conduct of the Company's officials was frequently disgraceful. The Governor's authority was often slight, for his servants were scattered over a wide area, his army was often mutinous and his own task was extremely unenviable, with many masters to please and little support to be expected. Corruption was rampant, and presents were freely taken from natives.<sup>1</sup> The servants of the Company, receiving meagre salaries, sought to supplement their incomes by private trading: by a grant of 1717 from the Emperor they already had the right to import and export goods free of duty, but now they tried to extend this privilege to gain exemption from duties levied on internal trade. Their dealings with natives were frequently arbitrary and unjust, the Indians being forced to buy and sell at the prices quoted by the English officials. Clive, who was an efficient administrator as well as a great soldier, endeavoured to induce the Company to pay adequate salaries; he forbade the receiving of presents by Company officials and the evasion of duties on internal trading; in addition, he attempted to purify the administration of the finances.

The whole position was reviewed by the Government after the great famine of 1770, which killed about one-third of the population of Bengal, made it impossible to collect the revenue, and reduced the Company almost to bankruptcy. Even the conduct of Clive did not pass without the severest criticism: many of his actions were condemned, though eventually the Government declared its appreciation of his

The British  
Government  
reviews  
Indian  
affairs

<sup>1</sup> Mir Kassim had spent £200,000 in presents to the Council Leadam, *Polit. Hist of England*, vol. ix, p. 76

Between 1757 and 1766 the princes and natives of Bengal had paid to the Company's servants £2,169,665 and £3,770,833 as compensation for losses suffered by the Company. *Camb. Mod Hist*, vol. viii., p. 571.

merit. Always a sensitive character, Clive became mentally harassed and depressed, and committed suicide in 1774. The previous year, however, when the Company was forced to sue for a loan of at least £1,000,000, the English Government had taken the first step towards the acknowledgment of its responsibilities by passing the Regulating Act.

and passes  
the Regulat-  
ing Act,  
1774.

The Government now granted to the Company the fateful privilege of shipping tea direct to America and a loan of £1,400,000, on which it was to pay 4 per cent. interest. In future all territory acquired by the Company was to be the property of the English State: the supremacy of the Governor of Bengal over the Presidencies of Bombay and Madras was asserted. The old Council at Calcutta was replaced by a Council of Four, nominated in the first instance by Parliament, afterwards by the Directors with the approval of the Crown. A new Supreme Court of Justice was elected, consisting of the Chief Justice and three judges, all appointed by the Crown; it was hoped that this Court would provide protection to native suitors against oppression. The political and military correspondence of the Company was to be submitted to the Secretary of State. The acceptance of presents from natives was forbidden and private trading was restricted. On the whole this was a statesmanlike measure: the responsibility of the British Government for the equitable treatment of India was recognised. Without defining the relation of the State to the Company, the affairs of the latter were opened to the scrutiny of the Government: and the Act attempted to establish an effective Central Administration for India. The Act had these main defects: it failed to define the powers of the Council of Four and the Supreme Court; it left the Governor at the mercy of the Four councillors; and the Governor of Bengal had inadequate control over the Governors of Bombay and Madras.

The civil re-  
forms of  
Warren  
Hastings

The first Governor of Bengal under the new system was Warren Hastings. He moved the Revenue Administration from Murshidabad to Calcutta, and transferred the collection and management of the taxes from Indian to English officials. He then made an examination of the Land Revenue, attempting to remove its injustices and to introduce an

equitable assessment. He brought the native Supreme Court of Justice to Calcutta, established civil and criminal courts in every district, handed over judicial functions to the English officials responsible for the collection of the taxes, and provided for their assistance by native assessors. Thus Hastings made a determined effort to establish justice for the Indian people and to suppress the arbitrary exploitation of the natives by the English.

This work of civil administration was Hastings's chief interest, but intricate negotiations and some warfare could not be avoided. The chief danger to British power in Northern, and to a lesser extent in Southern, India came from the restless aggression of the Mahratta chiefs. They were nominally united under the rule of the Peshwa, whose residence was at Poona, but individual chiefs, especially Sindia, Holkar, and the Rajah of Nagpur, were rapidly attaining complete independence. Oudh, with which Clive had already concluded an alliance, formed a buffer State between the Mahrattas of Central India and Bengal. Hastings therefore set out to strengthen this alliance with Oudh: as the Mogul Emperor was now under the control of Sindia, the Mahratta chief, Hastings refused to pay him the tribute of £300,000 per year agreed upon in 1765, and restored to Oudh the two provinces which had been taken from her to maintain the Emperor

and his attacks on the Mahrattas

Because of an attempt of the President to interfere in the election of the Peshwa, the Bombay Presidency was attacked by the Mahratta chiefs. They were supported by French forces, for France had entered into the War of American Independence. Hastings was equal to the occasion, the French stations of Chandernagore and Pondicherry were taken and the Mahrattas were defeated. This success left Hastings with a still more serious task to undertake. The Rajah of Mysore made an alliance with the Mahrattas, the Nizam of Haidarabad attacked the Carnatic and ravaged it to within a short distance of Madras, a powerful French fleet was despatched to Indian waters and a considerable French force was landed. This crisis has been described as "the most serious that has ever threatened the British

in India."<sup>1</sup> By great exertions and some harsh measures, which were later to cause him trouble, Hastings raised troops and money, induced the Mahrattas and the Nizam to quit the struggle, and forced Tippoo, the son and successor of Hyder Ali, to make peace. Two years later Hastings, who almost from the outset had been hampered by the Council of Four, resigned and retired to England. His work in India, more particularly his work in establishing the administration of Bengal, marks him as a statesman of the first order.

On his return to England, Hastings was attacked with great bitterness and obstinacy by Burke, who was supported by Pitt, although with reserve and moderation. A number of charges were preferred against him in the Commons, and some of these were adopted as the basis of his impeachment before the Lords. The chief accusations made against him were that troops which he had hired to the Nawab of Oudh had been used in an attack on another native state, Rohilkand; that a native, Nunkomar, who had accused him of receiving bribes, had been condemned to death for forgery and executed, that he had forced the Rajah of Benares to contribute large sums of money to the Company, and that on the Rajah's refusal to supply the Company with cavalry he had been fined £500,000, that he had urged the Nawab of Oudh to seize the treasures of his mother and grandmother to pay his debt to the Company, and that British troops had been used to overawe the princesses and induce them to surrender their treasures. Several of the charges had to be abandoned, the last two being treated as the most serious; but the impeachment dragged on until 1795, when Hastings was acquitted on all charges. He had, however, been ruined by the cost of his defence and died in 1818.

For the use of British troops against Rohilkand, Hastings could scarcely be held responsible, though the wisdom of hiring British troops to native princes may well be doubted. That the execution of Nunkomar was an excessive punishment is clear, but Hastings was not responsible for the sentence, nor did the motive of revenge enter into the case.

<sup>1</sup> Woodward, *Expansion of Brit Empire*, p. 237.

In the treatment of the Rajah of Benares and of the princesses of Oudh, there is ground for severe criticism of Hastings's conduct. His acquittal was due largely to the violence of his opponents and to the difficulties of the impeachment process rather than to any public sympathy with his actions. In spite of his great and permanent work as an administrator and as a defender of British power, Hastings had shown himself often harsh and unyielding, and his personal attention to financial management was too dilatory. But the time of the Mahratta War was one of the utmost difficulty, and demanded, even if it could scarcely justify, desperate measures. The conduct of Hastings makes clear the injustice of leaving a Company which was working for profit responsible for the government and defence of the country: the trial also revealed the difficulties under which Hastings had laboured, the obstacles which the Council had placed in his way and the spiteful venom of Councillor Francis. On the other hand, though the trial brought ruin to Hastings, it emphasised the need for scrupulous fairness in the treatment of Britain's native subjects. Hastings suffered for the cause of administrative purity and equity for which, particularly in the early years of his Governorship, he had toiled relentlessly.

and achieve-  
ments

Official interest in Indian affairs had produced something more profitable than the trial of Hastings. A Committee had been appointed in 1781 to investigate the administration of India, and in 1783 Fox, then the leader with North of the Coalition Government, produced an India Bill which bore the marks of Burke's labour. It prohibited the reception of presents from natives and subjected the officials of the Company to seven Commissioners appointed by the Government. George III successfully used his influence to quash the Bill and to overthrow the Government, and when Pitt took office one of his first concerns was to introduce a new India Bill which in 1784 became law. This Act did not interfere with the trading interests of the Company, but in political matters the Company was subjected to the direct control of the Government. The Directors were subordinated to a Board of Control, sitting in London and

Fox's India  
Bill is de-  
feated, 1783.



Pitt's India  
Bill, 1784

The beginning of a new  
attitude towards im-  
perial  
subjects

consisting of a Secretary of State, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and four Privy Councillors: this body had complete charge of civil, military, and financial matters. In India the administration was committed to the Governor-General and his subordinate Presidents, each assisted by a Council. All these were to be appointed by the Crown, at whose pleasure they held their office. The supremacy of the Governor-General over the Presidents of Bombay and Madras was again asserted, and measures were included to prevent extortion by Company officials. An Amending Act, passed in 1786, made it impossible for the Council to paralyse the action of the Governor, as had happened when Hastings was in India. The India Bill of 1784 made the English Government responsible for the political administration of those parts which were under British control, and in affairs of state it left the Company completely under the authority of the English Ministry. At the same time the actual details of administration in India still remained in the hands of the Company officials, and the Company retained the unrestricted management of trade. This dual control in India lasted until 1858. Thus the Government admitted its responsibility to the Indian peoples. Burke urged that "all political power which is set over men . . . ought to be in some way or other exercised ultimately for their benefit," and in 1800 the officials of the Company were informed that "they were to regard themselves no longer as the agents of a commercial concern but as the ministers and officers of a powerful Sovereign charged with sacred trusts for the good government of British India and the prosperity and happiness of its people."<sup>1</sup> Here perhaps may be seen indications of a new attitude of mind on the part of the Imperial Government towards its subjects. The Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1812 publicly declared its pride in the extension to India of "that sense of protection and assurance of justice which is the efficient spring of all public prosperity and happiness," and in the establishment of "a domestic administration more just in its principles and exercised with far greater

<sup>1</sup> Coupland, *Amer. Revol. and Brit. Emp.*, pp. 193 and 194

integrity and ability than the native one that preceded it."<sup>1</sup>

The successor of Hastings was Lord Cornwallis, whose Governorship from 1786-93 became memorable. He continued the work of Hastings in purifying the administration of the Company, suppressing many of the abuses of private trade, abolishing a large number of sinecures and increasing the salaries of the Company's servants, so leaving less temptation to extortion. He set up an elaborate system of local courts, and appointed British judges and magistrates. Following the policy of Hastings, he finally severed the connection between the administration of justice and the management of the revenue. His most important action in India was the Permanent Settlement of the Land Revenue. In India all land was the property of the State, and all occupiers had to pay a rent: these rents were collected by officials called Zemindars, who in Bengal had come to regard themselves rather as owners than as tenants of the districts under their control: their offices had in many cases become hereditary, and they had acquired magisterial powers. The Zemindar was responsible for the collection of a given amount assessed from time to time from his district: it was to his interest to raise from the actual inhabitants of the district as much as he could reasonably obtain, for the surplus he retained as his own profit. Hastings had leased out the collection of land revenues for periods of five years, safeguarding the peasants by enforcing agreements between them and the collectors, and he had begun a new assessment based on a painstaking investigation. The Settlement of 1793 was an assessment which was not subject to future revision, but it recognised without reservation the Zemindars as owners of the land. The scheme had considerable merit as well as serious defects: it facilitated the collection of the revenue, rendered the amount certain and gave to the Zemindars a legal title to their land. On the other hand, the fact that the assessment was permanent allowed all increase in the value of land to accrue to the Zemindars alone, and it established a small

The work of  
Lord Corn-  
wallis,  
1786-93

The Per-  
manent  
Settlement  
of the Land  
Revenue

<sup>1</sup> Ramsay-Muir, *The Making of Brit India*, pp. 255-6. An invaluable book, giving original sources for the history of India down to 1858.

class in undisputed possession of the land, and in a position to exploit the labours of their tenants

Cornwallis  
deals with  
Tippoo of  
Mysore

Cornwallis had to face external dangers in addition to problems of internal administration. Tippoo of Mysore, who had taken up the attack on the English after the death of his father, again opened hostilities in 1789. With the assistance of the Nizam and the Mahrattas, Cornwallis repulsed the attack and forced Tippoo to make terms, taking from him an indemnity of £3,000,000 and about one-third of his territory, forming the western coastal district of Mysore. This was annexed to the Bombay Presidency.

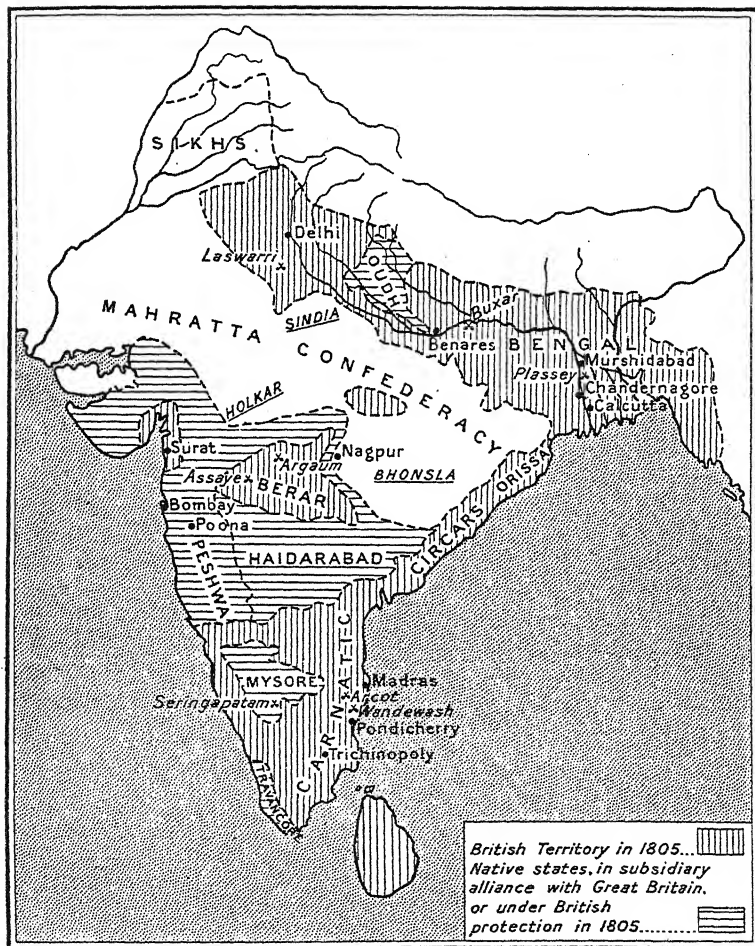
The Govern-  
ment of  
Lord  
Wellesley

The Governorship of Lord Wellesley, the elder brother of the future Duke of Wellington, had many important events. During his period of office (1798-1805) the opposition of France and the Mahratta Confederacy had again to be met. The French Revolution was leading to widespread foreign conquest, and Bonaparte was in Egypt, planning his advance to the East. The Mahrattas, a group of Hindu tribes, since the middle of the century had been rapidly extending and consolidating their power and developing their ambitions. But Wellesley was to prove himself the master of both the French and the Mahrattas. In addition, he seems to have had some vision of the establishing of the complete power of the British Crown in India as the successor to the authority of the Mogul Emperor. He came to India convinced "that if the Company was to remain in India it must become the paramount power,"<sup>1</sup> and this policy he refused to abandon, though it was unpopular with the Directors, and directly opposed to the policy of non-intervention dictated by Pitt's Act of 1784.

His exten-  
sion of  
British  
power.

In 1805 Wellesley freed the Mogul Emperor from the control of the Mahrattas, and gave him a pension. In a further war with Tippoo, Seringapatam was captured and Tippoo slain: Mysore was divided between England and her ally, the Nizam, the addition of English territory making her lands continuous from the East to the West of the Peninsula. In 1801, following the death of the Nawab of the Carnatic, the civil and military administration of this

<sup>1</sup> Ramsay-Muir, *Making of Brit. India*, p. 201.



INDIA IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY



Province was taken over by England, provision being made for the payment by the Company of a fixed income to the Nawab. Large additions had thus been made to the territory acquired by England, who had previously under her direct control only Bengal, Benares and part of Mysore. Wellesley next concluded a series of Subsidiary Treaties, by which the native powers ceded part of their territory to the English, and in return an English force was maintained in the Province for its defence and protection. A Treaty of this kind was made with the Nizam, another with Oudh, and a third with the Peshwa, the nominal head of the Mahratta Confederacy. When the Mahratta chiefs, Bhonsla and Sindhia, refused to accept the Treaty made with the British by their nominal superior, Wellesley attacked them. Colonel Arthur Wellesley won the Battles of Assaye and Argaum, while General Lake won the Battle of Laswarri and took Delhi. The Mahratta chiefs were forced to accept the British alliance, ceding the territory between the Jumna and the Ganges to the English and receiving into their lands a British garrison. The power of the Mahrattas was broken: they were confined between the large tract of British territory and the land of the Nizam, the British ally, in the south, Oudh, a dependent state, lay to the north. The effect of recognising the individual chiefs as well as the Peshwa was to rob the Confederacy of its last semblance of unity.

The Subsidiary Treaties

The defeat of the Mahrattas

One Mahratta chief, Holkar, was too powerful to be reduced. He attacked the English and inflicted several reverses upon them. Governor Wellesley was then recalled: he had contributed greatly to the extension of British power in India and had made considerable territorial acquisitions. His activity had checked the designs of the French, for in most cases the English garrisons, which were established by Subsidiary Treaties, replaced the forces of the French; the British control of the administration of the Province effectively excluded French intrigues. In addition, Wellesley had continued the administrative improvements begun by his predecessors, endeavouring to secure better training of the Company's officials, and even planning to establish a college for their education at Calcutta.

Wellesley's civil reforms.

Following his recall in 1805, there ensued a period of reaction, with Lord Minto as Governor-General, a real attempt being made to maintain the policy of non-intervention. As a result the power of Holkar continued and Central India again fell into a state of confusion. When in 1813 the Earl of Moira was appointed Governor, he speedily undertook the restoration of order, and before the end of his period of office British power was again firmly established in Central India.

The British  
position in  
India is se-  
cured

Thus in the eighteenth century there took place a great development of British power in India. In the middle of the century England owned only a few trading stations, and was faced by the serious menace of French aggression. When the Peace Treaty of Paris was signed in 1815, the danger from France had been removed: the administration of Bengal, the Carnatic, a large part of Mysore, and the Circar territory was entirely under English control, and the Nizam, Oudh, and the Mahratta States had all been obliged to accept Great Britain's alliance. They were dependent on English forces for their protection, and the maintenance of those forces was provided by lands placed in British possession. The commercial power of the Company had been retained and it was still responsible for the administration of the country. But the Company was now subject to the authority and supervision of the Crown, and the English Government, recognising its responsibility to the native peoples, had begun to establish an efficient and enlightened administration of the Provinces, it had set up a central and local system of justice which in general gave satisfaction to the Indians and yet introduced European standards of equity. The nominal authority of the Mogul Emperor and the Indian Princes had been upheld, but real power was in the hands of the British Governors: respect had been paid to Indian law and custom, yet British methods of government and justice had been introduced. Incidentally, by the end of the century the prosperity of the Company had been restored, though a restriction of its exclusive commercial monopoly had been begun. By the India Act of 1784 the Company was compelled to open not less than 300

tons of shipping to private enterprise, and in 1813, when the Company's Charter was renewed for twenty years, ships of not more than 400 tons were allowed to enter the Indian trade freely.

Outside India, Great Britain had few possessions in the East. In 1786 the East India Company secured the Isle of Penang from the Sultan of Kedah, and in 1808 this was erected into a separate Presidency. A settlement had also been made at Malacca, and from this and the station at Penang, England imported spices, gums, coffee and opium. During the War with Napoleon, Java and Ceylon were taken from the Dutch and Mauritius from the French. But at the Peace of 1815, Java was restored, Ceylon and Mauritius being retained.

British colonies in the East

The British colonisation of Australia had begun. Australia had been known to Europe since the voyages of Tasman in the seventeenth century, and had been visited by Dampier, an Englishman, at the close of that century. But Australia had been unfavourably depicted and little interest had been taken in it. The coastlines of Australia, New Zealand and Tasmania were more carefully traced by Captain Cook between 1768 and 1778. Even then the prospect of colonisation was remote, for the more attractive parts of the Australian coast had almost escaped notice. But the recognition of America's independence in 1783 made it necessary to find a fresh place to which convicts might be deported, for deportation was then a frequent method of relieving the country of the burden of maintaining criminals in its gaols. In May, 1787, therefore, Captain Phillip was despatched with the first batch of prisoners for Botany Bay, which he reached in the next year: finding a settlement there impossible, he removed to Port Jackson.<sup>1</sup>

Australia

The first convict settlement.

The first settlement was made by 717 convicts, of whom 529 were men and 188 women: during the seven months' voyage the lives of these had been saved by the extraordinary care of Phillip, who had set out with 756 convicts, for to

The difficulties of the early settlements.

<sup>1</sup> Most of the account which follows is based on Shann, *Econ Hist. of Australia*.



bring so many safely to their destination was in itself no small feat. No provision whatever had been made beforehand for their reception; the settlers landed in an unknown land, relying on the provisions they had brought with them and the products of their own hands. The Governor had to "build houses, cultivate crops, raise cattle, make roads, and do all this by the labour either of prisoners, who did not want to work, or of marines who had quite enough to do in looking after the prisoners."<sup>1</sup> No Governor could have faced such a task with less promising material: the settlers included some of the worst English criminals; there were among them no farmers, and few carpenters, and none had any considerable knowledge of gardening or live-stock. They had brought with them no ploughs, so that all the work of tilling the rough soil had to be done by spade and hoe. Yet the landing at Port Jackson was celebrated with some gusto. the Union Jack was hoisted, volleys were fired by the marines, and the Governor and his officers drank the healths of His Majesty and the Royal Family.<sup>2</sup> All the land cultivated was to be Crown property, and its produce was to be treated as a public stock out of which rations would be issued to the men. At the end of six months only eight or ten acres had been brought into cultivation, and these were sown with wheat and barley: but the crops failed owing to the fact that the seed had become overheated during its voyage from England. Forty-four sheep had been brought from England, but one by one they disappeared into the interior. The colonists fed on salt pork and flour, and the rations became so meagre that the men became unable to work owing to sheer weakness of body. A ship was sent to Cape Colony to procure a further supply of flour, but obtaining little there, it set out for China and was wrecked. Not until June, 1790, two years after the arrival of the first settlers, did another ship from England arrive, and then it brought the unwelcome cargo of 222 female convicts and the news that stores were on their way to the colony. These shortly afterwards arrived.

<sup>1</sup> Jose, *Hist. of Aust.*, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

In addition, however, to the difficulties of the initial establishment of the colony, there were others. Some of the convicts were scoundrels, and martial law had to be proclaimed: yet the Home Government continued to despatch large numbers of them to Australia from time to time. In 1790, soon after the arrival of the first food supplies, a fleet of three ships arrived bearing a further 750 convicts. The story of their voyage bore witness to the care of Phillip for his crews, for these three ships had lost 267 men on the way, and on landing 486 were sick and fifty died within a month.<sup>1</sup> Moreover "the women . . . sent out were of the most abandoned description."<sup>2</sup> Crime in the colony was rife and mutinies frequent: "The Sabbath was profaned as a day particularly appropriate to gaming, intoxication, and uncontrolled indulgence of every vicious excess."<sup>3</sup> The men worked unwillingly under many difficulties, and conditions were so bad that the most desperate attempts at flight were made: two men and a woman in an open boat left the colony and reached Timor: many set out to walk through the Bush in the hope of reaching China.<sup>4</sup> When Phillip returned to England after governing the colony for four years, he was broken in spirit and exhausted in body.

The marines who were sent out to maintain order considerably increased the difficulties of the colony. In 1790 a special regiment had been formed, called the New South Wales Corps, and under Grose, Phillip's successor, these men were given lavish grants of territory and extensive privileges: they began to lease convicts to work on their lands, and to exploit their labour, paying them in liquor, without the least consideration for their employees. They were an unruly set of fellows, as ready to cause trouble as to quell it: they paid scant respect to discipline, were contemptuous towards civil authority, and tyrannical towards the convicts. On one occasion, when the Corps was attending divine service, the preacher did not finish his sermon within the half hour allowed by military orders, whereupon the drum

The low character of the colonists.

The New South Wales Corps increases the difficulties of the Governors

<sup>1</sup> Shann, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> "Commission on Transportation, 1812," Shann, p. 32

<sup>3</sup> Shann, p. 18.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

beat and the guard and congregation marched out.<sup>1</sup> The discontent against the Corps culminated in 1806 in the arrest of one of their number, Captain MacArthur, following a dispute about the rum traffic; a military revolt ensued, and Governor Bligh was deposed. This made the English Government intervene; Colonel Macquarie was appointed Governor, and the New South Wales Corps was despatched to Europe for service against Napoleon.

The rum trade.

The rum trade was a source of constant trouble. By 1800 the population was consuming liquor annually at the rate of 5 gallons 3 quarts of spirits and 2 gallons 3 quarts of wine for every man, woman and child. In addition, a brewery for the manufacture of beer was set up in 1804.<sup>2</sup> In 1807 Governor Bligh had to report that "Mr Atkins, the Judge-Advocate, has been accustomed to inebriety; has been the ridicule of the community; sentences of death have been pronounced in moments of intoxication."<sup>3</sup> Convicts were selling their rations for liquor, and officers were making fortunes out of the vices of the people. Governor King had made the most vigorous attempts to check the trade without success.

The absence of free settlers

The chief trouble of the colony was the absence of free settlers. When Phillip returned to England in 1792 there were only seventy-six free settlers.<sup>4</sup> The best that could be done to remedy this defect was to settle on the land convicts whose period of punishment was ended; but these were poor substitutes for voluntary settlers.

The absolutism of the Governor.

The rule of the Governor was necessarily absolute and autocratic: until 1823 he was unfettered even by a Council. Justice was administered by military officers and trial by jury was not introduced until 1823. There was no revenue out of which the Governor could make provision for the development of the colony, and no taxes were collected: necessities which he had to buy were paid for with drafts on the English Treasury.

Yet in spite of the problems which the colony presented there was a gradual development of the country. Few

<sup>1</sup> Shann, p. 14

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45.

<sup>4</sup> Dodd, *Short Hist of Brit. Emp*, p. 225.

men did more for it than Macquarie (1810-21): he restored order after the military revolt of 1806: he began systematically to settle ex-convicts on grants of land: he set out to bring to an end the system of public cultivation of the soil and to abolish Government trading, intending to induce the colonists to work by encouraging private enterprise and paying for goods produced at a fixed price. He carried out a careful tour of the colony, marking out townships and encouraging the settlers to improve their farms and houses: and in 1812 he introduced a local coinage.

Gradual development of the colony

Meanwhile good work had been done by the Captain MacArthur who had played a part in the revolt of 1806. He was a zealous farmer who by 1793 had a farm of 250 acres, 100 of which were in cultivation; he had a horse, two mares, two cows, 130 goats, and over 100 hogs.<sup>1</sup> His was the first plough introduced into New South Wales in 1796. More important still were the experiments he began in the breeding of sheep: by 1794 these had resulted in the production of a kind of sheep whose wool was fine and valuable. In 1797 he introduced a few Merino sheep from the Cape and supplemented these in 1805 by sheep from the Royal Stud at Kew. his efforts were so successful that he may justly be regarded as the founder of the sheep-rearing industry of New South Wales.

Sheep farming begun by Captain MacArthur

By the year 1815 the colony was beginning to flourish. In 1806 the population numbered 5,807, but by 1821 it had risen to 29,783, of whom 19,126 were convicts.<sup>2</sup> In 1806 there were 600 or 700 private landowners, of whom about 400 were ex-convicts, 20,000 acres had been brought into cultivation and over 144,000 acres were then used for pasture.<sup>3</sup> In 1813 the number of sheep in the colony was 50,000, but this was increasing so rapidly that by 1821 it had reached 290,000. From 1814 to 1820 the colony was exporting between 60,000 and 90,000 lbs. of wool annually, and in 1821 New South Wales and Tasmania together exported 175,433 lbs. In 1810 there were in New South Wales 12,442 cattle, and by 1820 the number had risen to

By 1815 the colony is flourishing

<sup>1</sup> Shann, p. 18

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 37 and 77.

<sup>3</sup> *Camb. Mod. Hist.*, vol. ix., p. 739

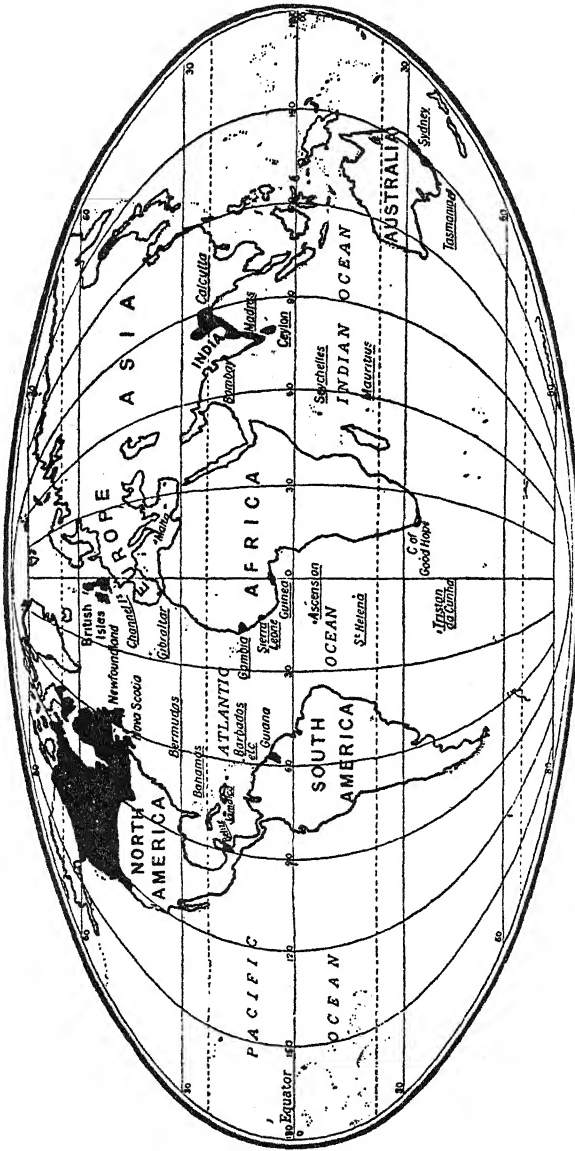
102,939<sup>1</sup> Coal had been discovered at Newcastle as early as 1797.

Some effort had been made towards further colonisation. In 1813 Blaxland crossed the Blue Mountains, which had previously been regarded as an insuperable barrier to the expansion westwards of New South Wales, and his discovery was followed by the founding of Bathurst by Governor Macquarie in 1815. Convicts from New South Wales had also begun a settlement in Tasmania, where Hobart Town and Launceston had been established. The Northern Island of New Zealand had been settled by whalers, fishers, timber and flax traders, and escaped convicts. In 1814 the Rev. Samuel Marsden, an energetic clergyman of New South Wales, founded a missionary station for work among the Maories at Whangaroa. By 1817 the colony in the Island was sufficiently important to warrant the establishment of a resident magistrate there by the Governor of New South Wales.

The Empire  
in 1815.

Thus during the eighteenth century there had taken place a considerable development of the Empire, which by 1815 was ready for further progress. After the loss of the American colonies reaction towards colonisation had set in: nevertheless, circumstances had necessitated the annexation of outposts, the new settlement of a part of Canada, a great extension of British power in India, and the beginning of the colonisation of Australia. Apart from the gradual decline of the West Indies, there had been also steady progress in the economic prosperity of the Empire. Mercantilism had received hard blows, and the old notion of an Empire based on trade was in doubt. In India the idea of "trusteeship" began to win some acceptance, and in British relations with Canada there were glimpses of a more modern attitude towards colonies. The more striking development of the Second British Empire belongs to the history of the nineteenth century, yet the beginnings of that Empire are before 1815.

<sup>1</sup> Shann, pp. 86-7.



THE BRITISH EMPIRE IN 1815



CHAPTER XI  
THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION,  
1689-1815

THE Revolution of 1688 ended the conflict between the Crown and Parliament. Sovereignty was finally settled in King and Parliament. In the reign of James II there had been no serious question of the right of the King to raise taxes without the consent of Parliament, though in the Bill of Rights the fact that he had levied taxes without consent between the time of his accession and the meeting of his Parliament was counted among the charges against him. Since the restoration of Charles II, the illegality of unparliamentary taxation was scarcely doubted. The dispute of James's reign concerned rather the right of the King to set aside Acts of Parliament and in particular to exercise his prerogative in favour of Catholics.

§ 1 *Introductory*  
The importance of the Revolution

William and Mary occupied the throne only by the sanction of Parliament and their title, such as it was, was a statutory one. This fact was emphasised when the Act of Settlement was passed, and the Stewart claimants were excluded in favour of the Hanoverians. By the Bill of Rights, the King might not be a Catholic, nor might he marry a Catholic: he was obliged to attend the communion of the Church of England, and to take the declaration against transubstantiation, the invocation of saints and the sacrifice of the mass.

Limits on the power of the King

The supremacy of parliamentary law was assured by the abolition of the suspending power and of the dispensing power as it had been "exercised of late." In the new coronation oath the King vowed to govern the people "according to the statutes in Parliament agreed on."<sup>1</sup> The regular session of Parliament was guaranteed by the passing of the Triennial Act in 1694. This Act reaffirmed

The supremacy of Parliament

<sup>1</sup> Grant-Robertson, *Select Statutes*, p. 118.



the provision of the Act of 1664 that a period of longer than three years should never elapse between the meetings of Parliament and added that a new Parliament should be elected at least once in three years. This latter provision was modified in 1716 by the Septennial Act, which made it necessary for an election to be held every seven years.

Annual sessions of Parliament become necessary.

In practice annual sessions of Parliament became necessary from the time of the Revolution onwards. In the reign of William, Parliament began to separate the King's personal income from that needed for the maintenance of the forces, to appropriate revenue for specific purposes and to allot to the King only sufficient for the needs of one year. These measures were made effective by the establishment of a Parliamentary audit of accounts. In 1689, when a mutiny broke out amongst the King's soldiers, a Mutiny Act was passed to allow offenders to be tried by military courts, but this Act continued in force only six months. Similar temporary Acts were passed from time to time, sometimes after intervals of varying lengths, sometimes for periods up to two years, but gradually the Act became an annual Act. Therefore, to obtain supplies and the passing of a Mutiny Act, it became necessary for the King to call Parliament every year.

Parliament was thus made more important. The King might still refuse to seal laws which it passed—and William used his power to veto four times—but that power was used for the last time in 1707, though it was not legally abolished. The right of members to complete freedom of speech in the house was no longer contested, and Parliament began to discuss all matters of State with freedom. It even acquired a considerable control over foreign affairs, calling for papers and information from time to time<sup>1</sup>.

§ 2 *The Cabinet*

The King was therefore obliged to entrust more and more business to his Ministers, chosen from the Houses, and it only remained for Parliament to enforce the responsibility of the Ministers to complete its control of national policy.

<sup>1</sup> See the article on Parliament and Foreign Affairs, 1603-1760, by Professor Turner, *English Historical Review*, vol. xxxiv. (1919), p. 172.

The development of cabinet government is therefore an important fact of eighteenth-century history.

The Cabinet had a double origin:<sup>1</sup> it had, on the one hand, the character of a committee of the Privy Council, but on the other hand, it was connected with those small groups of men, usually of important officials, whom the King used frequently to consult. In the latter half of the seventeenth century the Privy Council became inconveniently large, and during the eighteenth century the increase in its size continued. Under Charles II its members never exceeded thirty-five, but in the reign of James there were no less than forty-nine Privy Councillors. the number rose to sixty in the reign of William III, to eighty-two in 1712. it stood at sixty-four in 1750, and rose to 106 by 1782. Such a large body was clearly unsuitable for the effective execution of business: it included not only the chief Ministers of State but also some of the officials of the Royal household, such as the Lord Chamberlain and

Double  
origin of  
Cabinet

Declining  
importance  
of the Privy  
Council

<sup>1</sup> What follows on the Cabinet is mainly based on a series of articles

George III and his First Cabinet D. A. Winstanley, *English Historical Review*, vol. xvii (1902).

Inner and Outer Cabinet and Privy Council, 1679-1783 H. M. V. Temperley, *E.H.R.*, vol. xxvii (1912).

Cabinet in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century W. R. Anson, *E.H.R.*, vol. xxix (1914).

Development of Cabinet, 1688-1760 W. R. Anson, *E.H.R.*, vol. xxix (1914).

Lords Justices of England, 1695-1755. E. R. Turner, *E.H.R.*, vol. xxix (1914).

A Note on Inner and Outer Cabinets H. M. V. Temperley, *E.H.R.*, vol. xxxi (1916).

Committees of Privy Council, 1688-1760 E. R. Turner, *E.H.R.*, vol. xxxi (1916).

The Cabinet in Eighteenth Century E. R. Turner, *E.H.R.*, vol. xxxii (1917).

Inner Cabinet, 1739-41 R. R. Sedgwick, *E.H.R.*, vol. xxxiv (1919).

Council and Cabinet, 1679-88 G. Davies, *E.H.R.*, vol. xxxvii (1922).

Committees of Council and Cabinet, 1660-88 E. R. Turner, *Amer H.R.*, vol. xix (1914).

Development of Cabinet, 1688-1760 E. R. Turner, *Amer H.R.*, vol. xviii (1913) and vol. xix (1913).

See also E. R. Turner, *Privy Council in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (1928), 2 vols., and W. R. Anson, *Law and Custom of Constitution*, part ii. (1896).

the Lord Steward; the Archbishop of Canterbury also often attended. The work of the Privy Council was therefore taken over by a number of committees. The Privy Council continued as an important body which met frequently: it had great constitutional prestige: it was a legal body with wide executive powers which issued writs, proclamations and orders-in-council; it considered petitions, and its consent was necessary to many of the Government's proposals. But in general its work became more and more formal, and its decisions the mere ratification of resolutions of other bodies.

Develop-  
ment of  
Committees  
of the  
Council

Committees of the Council had been established by the Tudors. Some of these had been temporary and others permanent. Particularly important were the Committee of Foreign Affairs established shortly after the Restoration and formally recognised in 1668, and the Committee of Intelligence, which largely took over the work of the Committee of Foreign Affairs after its suppression in 1679. These committees were often referred to as cabinets, juntos or cabals, and may "be regarded as prototypes of the cabinet, though it is not so clear that any one of them is an ancestor."<sup>1</sup>

and then of  
a Committee  
of the whole  
Council

These committees were at first standing committees, limited in membership and in business, but gradually it became evident that the same members were sitting on the majority of the important committees, and that numbers who were nominally members of the various committees rarely attended. There emerged therefore a Committee of the whole Council, attended by all those competent or willing to transact business, and meeting under various names, according to the nature of the business considered. Thus the lesser Committees, such as the Committee for Trade and Plantations, "were merely aspects of the same committee of the whole Council, and though their names remained, their work had passed into the control of the Committee of the whole Council." This Committee met very frequently, perhaps at least once a week: it contained three or four, or even twelve members, but for important

<sup>1</sup> E. R. Turner, "Development of Cabinet, 1688-1760," *Amer. Hist. Rev.*, vol. xviii. (1913), p. 757.

business it was usually attended by seven or eight. In 1706-7 there were sixty-three members of the Privy Council, but whilst the Chancellor and the Treasurer attended twenty-four times, thirty-six attended five times or less, and twenty never attended, so that the work of the Privy Council was substantially in the hands of ten men. Its meetings were often attended by the Sovereign, and its members were sometimes referred to as Lords of the Committee.

Meanwhile, since the reign of James I, it had been possible to catch glimpses of a group of Royal advisers who incidentally were important officials, privy councillors, and members of the Committee of the whole Council, but who also met as the King's friends. This body was closely allied to, if not indistinguishable from, the Committee of Foreign Affairs from 1660-79, but it became more clearly distinguishable after 1679 when Charles had grown to distrust the Privy Council and all its official committees. By the time of the Revolution this Cabinet Council was clearly recognised. Of the members of the Privy Council many rarely attended: for instance, though there were eighty councillors in Anne's reign, the number who frequently attended was about thirty. The Cabinet Council met frequently in the King's palace at Kensington on appointed days, and considered both controversial and routine work. In the reign of Anne it contained about ten members, and its meetings were usually attended by the Queen herself.

The Cabinet  
Council

There were then, in the reign of Anne, three executive bodies—the Privy Council, the Committee of the whole Council, and the Cabinet Council. There was a good deal of duplication of business: in particular, the Committee and the Cabinet Council did very similar work, considering Bills, reports, and petitions, drafting instructions for the judges, receiving memorials from colonial governors, and considering the equipment and levying of troops. Much of this work was also considered more formally by the Privy Council.

Relations of  
the Privy  
Council, the  
Committee  
and the  
Cabinet  
Council

To contemporaries and to later historians the task of differentiating between the Committee and the Cabinet

The distinction between the Committee and the Cabinet

Council has been difficult. Not only did they consider similar business, but their composition was frequently identical. The Committee met in the morning at Whitehall, the Cabinet Council in the evening at St. James or Kensington. The Committee was in theory a Committee of the Privy Council, and was recognised by law; formal minutes of its meetings were kept by the secretary; and though in practice it was attended by great officials only, it might be attended by others. The Cabinet Council was a royal and a secret Council, and it was certainly an extra-legal body, whose membership depended definitely and exclusively on the wishes of the Sovereign.

The decline of the Committee

It is unnecessary and would be unwise to attempt to define the relations between these three bodies further. Gradually the Committee of the Council became less important and the Cabinet more important. This was the tendency after 1714, though the Committee still met and did business of considerable importance as late as 1741. But at that time the Committee, which was attended by Cabinet members, was scarcely distinguishable except by name from the Cabinet. The Committee in turn shared the fate of the Privy Council, and was relegated to a subordinate position in the consideration of routine business.

Increasing numbers of Cabinet Councillors

A further change was also taking place. The Cabinet Council was becoming too large to be efficient, and was being slowly replaced by an inner group of Cabinet Ministers. In the reign of William the Cabinet Council never had more than twelve members, but by 1724 it had sixteen, and by 1757 it had nineteen members. As late as 1730 the Cabinet Council still included the Archbishop, the Lord Steward and the Lord Chamberlain; but these rarely attended, and whilst the Cabinet numbered fourteen, rarely did more than half of these meet together.

make the Cabinet Council ineffective.

So large a body could not be an effective executive institution, and by the middle of the century membership of the Cabinet Council did not imply the possession of any very great political power. Horace Walpole once wrote. "The Duke (of Leeds) is made Cabinet Councillor, a rank that will soon become indistinguishable from Privy

Councillor by growing as numerous."<sup>1</sup> The Cabinet Council continued to exist but with ever-declining power until about 1783, when it seems to have disappeared, though it is said to have met occasionally, subsequently, for it considered the draft of the King's Speech early in the nineteenth century.

From an early date, at least from 1679, small groups of Ministers, who were usually members of the Cabinet Council, met together to discuss measures and to agree upon the attitude they would adopt. These meetings became regular under Walpole's administration, and by the middle of the eighteenth century at any rate, perhaps at the time of the Pelham administration, perhaps about 1755, this inner group of Cabinet Ministers had begun to supersede the full Cabinet Council. Other changes facilitated the transference of important business to these small groups. After the Hanoverian Succession, the King began to refrain from attending the meetings of the Committee of the Council, and his appearances at the Cabinet Council became gradually rarer: whereas Anne had almost invariably attended its meetings, George I attended regularly only in the earliest years of his reign, though in 1716 he was represented by the Prince of Wales. George II attended the Cabinet Council twice when the King's Speech was under consideration, and was represented by the Queen as Regent in his absence in 1729. George III attended the Cabinet Council twice, in 1779 and 1781, but on the first occasion he read a speech to the Cabinet and did not seek its advice.

Its work is taken over by an inner group of Cabinet Ministers

As the King's attendance in the Cabinet became rarer, the Cabinet ceased to meet in the Royal palace, and was transferred to the office of the Secretary of State in Whitehall. This somewhat increased the importance of the informal meetings of groups of Ministers, which were often held at one of the Minister's houses—at Walpole's residence in Chelsea or at Newcastle's in Lincoln's Inn Fields. At first, these meetings were not recognised as Cabinet meetings, though business of considerable importance was transacted in them; but, it has been argued, about the middle of

whose meetings are informal and extra-legal

<sup>1</sup> Anson, *Law and Constitution* (2nd edit.), part II., p. 113

Distinction  
between the  
Cabinet and  
this inner  
group be-  
comes more  
pronounced.

the eighteenth century they were regarded as being meetings of a definitely recognised inner Cabinet. It has been argued that such an inner Cabinet existed at least from the accession of George II, or again at least from the reign of Anne. By 1738 Pulteney pointed to the existence of "the privy council and the Cabinet Council, and for all he knew a more secret and less numerous council still, by which the other two were directed." In 1775, though a Cabinet Minister, Lord Mansfield was not a member of "the efficient Cabinet." It has been asserted that by about 1744 there was a formally recognised group of those who were "usually consulted on secret affairs." This body was clearly distinguished from the Cabinet Council, was composed usually of the Chancellor, the President of the Council, the First Lords of the Treasury and Admiralty, and the two Secretaries. Minutes of its meetings were regularly taken; it was an exclusive body, which could not be attended by those not definitely summoned, and its members were regularly supplied with copies of State papers in cabinet boxes.<sup>1</sup>

But there is  
no formally  
recognised  
Inner  
Cabinet

These statements have been questioned. The existence of meetings of an inner group of the most important Ministers is certain, and the fact that the effective work of the Cabinet Council was taken over by that inner group is not doubted. Between 1729 and 1741 there were 178 Cabinet meetings, ninety-three of which were attended by nine or more and eighty-five by eight or less: between 1739 and 1758 there were seventy Cabinet meetings, seventeen of which were attended by nine or less, thirty-six were attended by between six and eight, and seventeen were meetings of five or less. But that this proves the existence of an inner and an outer Cabinet is denied, the interpretation accepted being merely that some Cabinet meetings were larger than others. Whilst the existence of the inner group is admitted, it is denied that there was "a committee or regularly appointed part of the Cabinet." The inner Cabinet was, it is maintained, an informal body, rather than a clearly recognisable and formally established body, and it is denied that there was

<sup>1</sup> Anson, *Law and Constitution*, part II., pp. 114 and 115.

"an inner efficient Cabinet and an outer formal one, two separate bodies actually distinct" even in the second half of the eighteenth century. Certainly the suggestion that such an inner Cabinet existed from Anne's reign, and still more that it existed continuously from that time, is at least insufficiently attested by the evidence extant. That the Cabinet was a purely private and unofficial meeting of certain privy councillors was the view of Fox as late as 1806. The Sovereign did not attend the meetings of the inner Cabinet, though he was informed, as he still is, of its decisions.

Obviously there could be little development of Cabinet Government or systematic observance of its principles so long as the Sovereign retained great power. William negotiated the Partition Treaties without consulting his Ministers and generally acted as his own chief Minister, often he visited the Treasury, insisted on the despatch of money for the payment of the troops, and waited for his orders to be carried out. Anne, though less assertive, was wont to exert considerable influence over her Cabinets. George I and II took less part in the administration of English affairs, yet even their influence was not negligible, particularly in foreign affairs. Under George III the authority of the Sovereign was again asserted with vigour. Before the Hanoverian Succession the Sovereign presided in both the Committee of the Council and in the Cabinet Council, so that these bodies were unpopular in Parliament,<sup>1</sup> it was said in 1701 that it was "an innovation by evil ministers that war and peace should be finally concluded in a secret cabal, and only passed through the Privy Council for form's sake."<sup>2</sup> One of the clauses of the Act of Settlement was an attempt to make the King take the advice of the whole Privy Council, but this was repealed in 1705.

The Crown retained many important powers. The Sovereign could take executive action on his own initiative, on the advice of a single Minister or of any group of Ministers he liked to consult. The Ministers were still in theory the

Develop-  
ment of the  
principles of  
Cabinet  
Government  
hindered by  
the atten-  
dance of the  
sovereign

and by his  
considerable  
influence.

<sup>1</sup> See Blauvelt, *Devel of Cab. Govt. in Eng*, pp. 72 and 76.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 100.



Ministers of the Crown, and often they were that in practice also. Through the century Ministers were more frequently the King's nominees than his enemies. Stanhope and Walpole were chosen by the King, Newcastle "owed to royal favour several notable victories over a majority of his colleagues in the ministry."<sup>1</sup> North and the younger Pitt were also the choice of the Crown. The Whig Junto, the elder Pitt, Grenville and Fox, forced themselves upon the Sovereign, but these were exceptional cases, and they held office only for short periods. The Crown had the unlimited right to create peerages and extensive powers of patronage: in Anne's reign elections followed the establishment of Ministries, or, in other words, the Commons were dependent on the Ministers and the Crown, rather than the Ministers on the Commons. The Coalition Government of Fox and North was overthrown by the King's use of his powers of patronage against it. Moreover, in the eighteenth century there was no theory of opposition widely held. The accepted theory was that "the Crown had an undoubted right to choose its Ministers, and that it was the duty of subjects to support them, unless there was some very strong and urgent reason to the contrary."<sup>2</sup> Opposition was likely to result in disfavour, and was also easily construed as mere factiousness, if not disloyalty.<sup>3</sup>

The Cabinet  
not treated  
as a unit in  
the eight-  
teenth cen-  
tury

Any development of the principle of corporate responsibility of the Cabinet was obviously difficult if in the most important business decisions were taken by an inner group. George III even encouraged differences between the inner group and the rest of the Cabinet in order to increase his own power. Rarely, in fact, did the Cabinet act as a unit: resignations of the whole Ministry like that of the Pelhams in 1746 were exceptional. More frequently changes of administration were made piecemeal, and often Ministers in one Government remained in office after their leaders had been removed. Often Ministers opposed each other: for instance,

<sup>1</sup> Mission of Henry Legge to Berlin, 1748. Sir R. Lodge, *Trans Roy. Hist. Soc.*, fourth series, vol. xiv. (1931)

<sup>2</sup> A. M. Davies, *George III and the Development of the Constitution*, p. 17 n.

<sup>3</sup> Note how throughout the Hanoverian period opposition emanated from a faction of which the centre was the Prince of Wales

Carteret remained in office under Walpole for nine years though he was virtually in opposition to him. A measure for the relief of Quakers, introduced by Walpole in 1736, was rejected in the Lords largely because of the opposition of the Lord Chief Justice and the Lord Chancellor. In 1753 Hardwicke's Marriage Bill was opposed by his colleague Fox, the Secretary at War. After 1760 there were open conflicts between Newcastle, Pitt and Bute. Bute, in turn, was opposed by Bedford, his Lord Privy Seal. Again, Grafton, the Prime Minister, and Camden disclaimed responsibility for the imposition of a tax on tea, although it was agreed upon by the entire Cabinet, of which they were members<sup>1</sup>. The principle of the corporate responsibility of the Cabinet for its measures was constantly opposed by the idea that each Minister was absolutely responsible for his own Department. For instance, the elder Pitt declared that the Secretary and the Chancellor of the Exchequer "at least, should have access to the Crown; habitual, frequent, familiar access, that they may tell their own story to do themselves and their friends justice, and not be the victims of a whisper"<sup>2</sup>. As late as 1806 Temple declared that "the Cabinet was not responsible as a Cabinet, but the Ministers were responsible as the officers of the Crown."<sup>3</sup>

Ministers frequently oppose each other

There was no party system in the eighteenth century upon which Cabinet unity could be based. Politics were personal, and parties were largely family affairs. "The eighteenth century party was, like the feudal army, made up of the aggregations of the followers of various leaders"<sup>4</sup>. Whig and Tory parties were little more than combinations of groups which followed certain leaders. For example, the Circular Letter which was sent out to the Friends of the Administration summoning them to a meeting at the Cockpit at the opening of the session, which was the predecessor of the modern whip, was issued to the leaders of these groups, who brought up their friends and dependents<sup>5</sup>. Thus the

and party politics are subservient to family influence

<sup>1</sup> Anson, *Law and Custom of Constitution*, part II., p. 118.

<sup>2</sup> Blauvelt, *Devel of Cab. Govt*, p. 193.

<sup>3</sup> Anson, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

<sup>4</sup> Blauvelt, *op. cit.*, p. 248.

<sup>5</sup> See an article on "The Circular Letter," L. B. Namier, *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, vol. XLV. (1929).

Duke of Newcastle wrote to his friends, to regional managers, group leaders, and individual members; and when in 1761 he drew up a list of 342 members who were to be asked to attend, 194 of them had to be approached through his friends and not by him as the head of the Government.<sup>1</sup>

The Govern-  
ment has a  
permanent  
following

The Government had a following of its own owing to the use of the Crown's powers of patronage, to the close connection of the Civil Service with the Government of the day, and to the fact that offices and commissions were usually given to secure political service in the House. These adherents of the Government tended to become a permanent group, always following the Administration, whatever its party label. Thus after his resignation, Newcastle, who had distributed the favours of the Crown for eight years, counted on having 317 friends in the Commons, but within a month he could count only on 214, for he found that many who had previously followed him would accept the wishes of the King and Bute.<sup>2</sup> The fact that a one-party administration was formed by the admission of the Whig Junto, and that the Whigs acquired a long lease of office in 1714, is less important than might be supposed. There was little real unity even when one-party administrations were in existence, and the distinction between the Court and the Opposition, or between the "ins" and the "outs," was a more real one than the distinction between the Whigs and the Tories.

The Cabinet  
does not  
admit re-  
sponsibility  
to the  
Commons.

Nor was the principle that the Cabinet was responsible to the Commons at all widely admitted. Ministers frequently remained in office after their measures had been defeated in the House. In fact, Walpole and Shelburne were the only Ministers of the eighteenth century who resigned because they were defeated in the Commons. The idea that the power of a Minister should "depend on a vote in the House, would indeed have been an entirely novel constitutional conception" in 1755.<sup>3</sup> That the support of the Commons was important is evident; for instance, in 1757 Lord Waldegrave declined to become Prime Minister because

<sup>1</sup> The Circular Letter. L. B. Namier, *op cit.*, p. 600.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 606 and 610.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 593.

"nothing could be done for the public service without a steady majority in both Houses of Parliament"<sup>1</sup> But it is also clear that the Government could usually obtain a majority by the use of the powers of the Treasury and by the assistance of noble patrons whose friendship had been won. And very few Ministers would have admitted that defeat in the House necessitated their resignation.

During the eighteenth century the position of Prime Minister was firmly established. Walpole had been strong enough in that position to enforce some of the other principles of Cabinet government. After his fall the convenience of an acknowledged leader was admitted. The attempt of George III to take the responsibility of ruling only emphasised the unwisdom of the attempt. At the same time political impeachments passed out of use, and legal responsibility was being replaced by ministerial responsibility enforced by loss of office, the time had come when responsibility for the acts of the Crown had to be accepted by the Ministry.

Position of the Prime Minister firmly established

The attempt of George III to revive the power of the Crown was in no way revolutionary. He utilised the ill-defined position of the Cabinet, and the theory of departmental responsibility, to increase his own influence; he used the royal powers of patronage to build up the power of the Crown instead of the powers of a faction. The failure of his attempt discredited it and discouraged its repetition. In the administration of Pitt the modern Cabinet began. The outer Cabinet had ceased to be important, responsibility could hardly be dissociated from the inner group. Though the nominee of the Crown, Pitt soon acquired an independent position, and he enforced the principles of Cabinet government which were subsequently accepted. Parties were reorganised and something like the modern party system developed, having a party discipline, a party programme, a party press, and a party purse.<sup>2</sup>

Cabinet government develops after the failure of George III to re-establish the power of the Crown

As regards Parliament in the eighteenth century, the House of Lords showed little increase in numbers till after

<sup>1</sup> Blauvelt, *Devel of Cab Govt*, p. 168.

<sup>2</sup> See Eng. Party Organisation in Early Nineteenth Century. A. Aspinall, *E.H.R.* (1926)

§ 3 *Parliament and Representation.*  
The House of Lords

loses ground to the Commons.

1783· in 1704 it contained 161 temporal Lords and twenty-six spiritual Lords· the Union with Scotland added sixteen peers, and in 1719 the House had 220 members. In 1780 there were still only 224 Lords<sup>1</sup> George III, however, created 388 new titles, of which 128 were new creations and 140 of which were made while Pitt was in office.<sup>2</sup> The Union with Ireland added twenty-eight peers, an archbishop, and three bishops to the House, and after 1791 Catholic peers were allowed to take their seats. An attendance of seventy members was frequent in the reign of Anne and big debates were often attended by as many as 130.<sup>3</sup> But throughout the century the Lords were losing ground to the Commons. They had lost the right of initiating or altering Money Bills: in 1747 a Bill for the abolition of heritable jurisdictions in Scotland was transferred to the Commons on the ground that since compensation was to be given to the owners of these jurisdictions the Bill was a Money Bill; and in 1801 the Commons refused to entertain a Bill, begun by the Lords, to free certain persons from the payment of rates and poor relief levies. The House of Lords had begun to become the "hospital of invalids," as Pulteney called it.<sup>4</sup> In the reign of Anne there were several conflicts between the two Houses, notably regarding the Occasional Conformity Bills, the Case of the Aylesbury Men and the Treaty of Utrecht· but after Anne's death there was little altercation. Nevertheless, though the Lords had become the less important House, they still held the majority of the chief posts, for few Commoners won their way into the Cabinets of the eighteenth century· they had a large measure of control over the Commons, which was composed largely of members or dependents of noble families· and they had a firm grip upon the local government of the country.

The House of Commons.

In the House of Commons there were 513 members, twenty-four representing Wales and 489 representing

<sup>1</sup> Turberville, *House of Lords in Eighteenth Century*, pp. 4-5.

<sup>2</sup> Anson, *Law and Custom of Constt.*, Part II (2nd ed.), p. 160

<sup>3</sup> Turberville, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-6

<sup>4</sup> Blauvelt, *Devel. of Cab. Govt.*, p. 190.

England The Union of Scotland added forty-five and the Union with Ireland 100 members to the House. Of the members representing England, eighty sat for the counties and the rest for boroughs. Until 1774 members were legally bound to be residents of their constituency, but this obligation had long ceased to be strictly observed. After 1710 members for the counties had to possess an annual income of £600 and members for boroughs an income of £300 from landed property. Fictitious titles to land were often created to evade this obligation, and in 1722 members were compelled to swear an oath that they were duly qualified. Still the Act was evaded by temporary transfers of titles, until this was prevented in 1760. Few members, however, were excluded on account of their lack of incomes from land, and many, such as Yorke (later Earl of Hardwicke), Burke, Pitt, Fox, Sheridan and Wilkes, were provided with land by their friends. The oaths imposed by Elizabethan legislation excluded Catholics from the House, but Protestants were excepted from the penalties they incurred by taking their seats in the House by Indemnity Acts passed annually from 1726 onwards.

Qualifica-  
tions of  
members

The distribution of constituencies, the franchise, and the electoral machinery all needed reform. Towns were far more heavily represented than the counties and the South of England was excessively represented. Cornwall returned forty-four members, only one less than Scotland, and two more than those returned by Durham, Northumberland and Yorkshire.<sup>1</sup> Devon had twenty-six members, Dorset twenty, Somerset eighteen, Wiltshire thirty-four, so that the five counties of the south-west returned 142 members, or approximately one quarter of the total. The ten counties south of Bristol and the Lower Thames returned 237 members, and if London, Middlesex and the neighbouring counties be counted, they returned 293 members in all, or over half of the total.<sup>2</sup> About one-third of these Parliamentary boroughs were seaports.

Unfair dis-  
tribution of  
seats—ex-  
cessive re-  
presentation  
of towns and  
of the south

<sup>1</sup> W. P. Courtney, *Parliamentary Representation of Cornwall*, p. v

<sup>2</sup> See Porritt, *Unreformed House of Commons*, pp. 90-97. Namier, *Structure of Politics at Accession of George III*, pp. 79-80.

This defect  
due to

(a) decline  
of towns  
once  
important,  
(b) policy of  
the Tudors

Part of the injustice of this over-representation was due to the enfranchisement of these boroughs at a time when the South of England, and particularly the ports, were overwhelmingly important. Even many of the Cornish boroughs had once been centres of the important tin-mining industry, and twenty-one of them were named in Domesday Book. But this excessive representation was largely the work of the Tudors: at the accession of Henry VIII there were, for instance, only six boroughs in Cornwall with Parliamentary representation. In many cases the absence of any justification for representation was obvious. Steyning and Bramber, for example, which were so close together as to be united for municipal purposes, each returned two members, Boroughbridge and Aldborough, which had the same privilege, were half a mile apart. Gatton in Surrey never had more than six electors. The last borough to be enfranchised was Newark in the reign of Charles II. No other new seats had been created since the death of James I, for Charles I only restored eighteen seats whose representation had lapsed. The representation of England was then patently out of date, and in some cases had never been arranged with justice.

The fran-  
chise in the  
counties,

The franchise was equally full of anomalies. In the counties there was a uniform qualification; all men with freehold property valued at 40s. per annum were allowed to vote. This legally excluded all leaseholders and copyholders, though the term freehold was often liberally interpreted. Though each county returned two members, there were naturally large differences in the number of voters: Rutland, for instance, had 609 voters, while Yorkshire had 15,054 in 1741, and 23,007 in 1807. The total number of voters for the entire county representation was probably about 160,000,<sup>1</sup> about two-thirds of the total number of voters in England.

and in the  
towns

In the boroughs there was a variety of qualifications. In about twelve boroughs the franchise belonged to almost all the men inhabitants; in about forty-seven boroughs the voters were all those who paid scot and lot (Poor and Church

<sup>1</sup> Namier, *op cit.*, pp. 82-83.



# THE REPRESENTATION OF ENGLAND BEFORE 1832

From Porritt's *The Unreformed House of Commons* (Cambridge University Press).





rates); in about thirty-nine the voters were the burgage tenants; in about forty-three the members were returned by the corporations, and in about sixty-two the freemen elected the representatives<sup>1</sup> In many of these boroughs the number of voters was small from the beginning. In many more for various reasons the number grew gradually less This tendency increased in the eighteenth century and was accelerated by the action of Parliament itself. From 1586 disputed elections had been tried by the House of Commons or its Committee In 1696 and in 1729 Last Determination Acts were passed which made the decisions of the Commons as to the nature of the franchise in a disputed election permanently binding By that time many of the boroughs had narrow franchises, many had fallen under the influence of noble families The Commons were naturally inclined to accept the established custom of boroughs, and also to sympathise with the influence of the ruling class, and the result of these Acts was to prevent attempts to widen the franchise, and to make it possible for borough patrons to have their position legally recognised by a vote of the Commons, where their rights were sympathetically regarded. In 1761, of the 204 English boroughs, only 22 had over 1,000 voters, 22 had between 500 and 1,000 voters, 11 about 500, and the rest under 500 voters<sup>2</sup> In Cornwall the 52 borough members were returned by 1,050 voters in 1783: St. Ives had the largest number of voters, 180, and 7 boroughs had less than 30 voters.<sup>3</sup> Of the 8 Cinque ports, 5 had less than 40 voters The total number of voters in the boroughs may be reckoned at about 85,000.<sup>4</sup>

Small electorates of the boroughs.

The opportunities for sharp practice were increased by the absence of any electoral roll, the system of open voting, and the vagaries of election dates. "There was no registration and the right of each elector to poll was determined after he appeared and offered himself as a voter. . . . Naturally numerous brawls and riots resulted, and the

Defects in electoral machinery

<sup>1</sup> See Namier, *op. cit.*, p. 95, and Porritt, *op. cit.*, pp. 4 and 30

<sup>2</sup> Namier, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

<sup>3</sup> Courtney, *Parl. Repres. of Corn.*, pp. 22 and 23.

<sup>4</sup> Namier, *op. cit.*, pp. 100 and 102.

remarkable thing is that so few lives were lost."<sup>1</sup> There was no vote by ballot, each voter had to record his vote before the returning officer verbally, and often the candidates' agents were in close attendance not only to notice his vote but also, if necessary, to prevent his recording it, even by force. In the counties the place of the election was not fixed beforehand, as the writ directed the sheriff to hold it at the next county court, which he could hold where he liked. An Act of 1696 enacted that county elections should be held "at the most public and usual place of election and where the same has most usually been for forty years past."<sup>2</sup> This left the sheriff considerable choice, and in 1734 the two candidates for Hampshire had the poll moved in the middle of the contest from Winchester to the Isle of Wight.<sup>3</sup> Until 1785 there was no limit to the length of the poll, and in the previous year the poll at Westminster was held over a period of forty days. In 1785 the poll was restricted to fifteen days. Demands for a scrutiny and election petitions were naturally numerous. For instance, after the election of 1708, petitions involving ninety seats were presented.<sup>4</sup> There was also no fixed date for elections, and the opening of the poll was determined by the returning officer.<sup>5</sup>

Great variety  
of electoral  
methods

The methods of securing favourable returns were naturally very varied. In the absence of any electoral roll, the presiding magistrate had the task of deciding the qualification of voters who presented themselves. Occasionally they were therefore accompanied to the polling station by the servants of candidates, to assist them in refusing the votes of some and to prevent them declining the votes of others.<sup>6</sup> Violence was common. at Westminster, agitators were hired at 5s. per day, and gangs of rowdies stood nominally to keep the way to the hustings clear, really to intimidate the

<sup>1</sup> William Pitt and Westminster Elections W. T. Laprade, *Amer Hist Rev.*, vol. xviii (1913), pp 259-60

<sup>2</sup> Porritt, *op cit*, p 186

<sup>3</sup> Newcastle and Election of 1734 B Williams, *Eng Hist Rev.*, vol. xii. (1897), p. 459.

<sup>4</sup> W. T. Morgan, *Eng Polit Parties and Leaders in Reign of Anne*, p. 339.

<sup>5</sup> See *Parli Papers of John Robinson*, ed W Laprade, p. 35.

<sup>6</sup> See Turberville, *House of Lords in Eighteenth Century*, p 456.

supporters of the opposition.<sup>1</sup> The candidates usually kept open house at some local tavern, and often votes were extracted from drunken men. Landlords often threatened their tenants with eviction as the penalty for not voting for their candidate.<sup>2</sup> In towns where the vote was attached to certain properties, these were often bought, hired or temporarily transferred. Properties were frequently divided so that extra votes were created. In towns where the freemen had the vote, the mayor and corporation often created numbers of honorary freemen for electoral purposes, and these were often strangers to the town. This happened at Bedford, Gloucester, Derby, and many other towns. The corporation sometimes threatened the freemen with impressment for naval or military service unless they supported the corporation's candidate. Local charities were often used as bribes to the electors.

It would, however, be easy to exaggerate the absurdities and injustices of the eighteenth-century parliamentary system. It is clear many boroughs were so small that they easily fell under the control of patrons. At Brecon "Harley's recommendation would have been equivalent to an election":<sup>3</sup> Walpole declared in 1727 that he knew he "could always be rechosen" at Lynn and Castle Rising.<sup>4</sup> Newcastle boasted in 1768 that he had chosen the members for Hastings since 1714.<sup>5</sup> In 1784 there were eighty-nine close boroughs,<sup>6</sup> and in 1793 the report of a Committee of the Society of Friends stated that 306 members were returned by patrons.<sup>7</sup> Corruption was always widespread and elections were costly. For instance, after the election of 1708, petitions were presented which alleged the practice of bribery in twenty-two seats.<sup>8</sup>

The election of 1768 at Northampton is said to have cost the two parties at least £30,000, the Duke of Portland was

There are many "close" boroughs

<sup>1</sup> *Amer Hist Rev*, vol xviii. (1913), p. 262.

<sup>2</sup> See Winstanley, *Lord Chatham and the Whig Opposition*, p. 215 n.

<sup>3</sup> Morgan, *op cit*, p. 119

<sup>4</sup> Porritt, *op cit.*, p. 314

<sup>5</sup> Winstanley, *Lord Chatham and Whig Opposition*, p. 214

<sup>6</sup> *Parli Papers of John Robinson*, ed W. T. Laprade, p. 82.

<sup>7</sup> Turberville, *House of Lords in Eighteenth Century*, p. 459

<sup>8</sup> Morgan, *op. cit*, p. 328

reported to have spent £40,000 in the election<sup>1</sup> Some boroughs, such as Shoreham, were practically open to the highest bidder<sup>2</sup> other seats were sold or even leased to members for a period of years By 1761 the usual price for a seat was £2,000, by 1801 the market price of a nomination was £5,000 or £6,000, and a seat could be purchased for £1,000, or even £1,800, per year In 1767 nominations were advertised for sale for the first time. Oldfield became "a notable borough broker"<sup>3</sup>

§ 4 Patronage

Patronage develops slowly

and is rarely complete

This power of patronage had grown up very gradually, and was not the product of the eighteenth century only, though its development was accentuated during that time As early as the days of the Tudors patrons nominated to boroughs, Edward VI nominated some of the members for the new Cornish boroughs<sup>4</sup> Seats in Parliament were then little valued, in fact, some boroughs regarded representation as a burden rather than as a privilege, and as late as 1614 Minehead declined to send a member to Parliament.<sup>5</sup> By 1685 Wharton had the power of returning thirty members.<sup>6</sup> At the time of the Revolution Newcastle had influenced the election of sixteen members of the Commons.<sup>7</sup> Yet the number of boroughs absolutely under the control of patrons was always small. Even of the boroughs with between 500 and 1,000 voters, none was controlled by the Government, and none was under the power of one family<sup>8</sup> "There were few places such as Old Sarum, which could in unqualified terms be put down as absolutely and irrevocably under the command of one man, his heirs and assigns. In most cases 'control' means merely a command so complete that it required exceptional negligence or ill-luck on the part of the owner to be deprived of it. Still cases of that kind did occur, and there was almost always cause for anxiety."<sup>9</sup> Nor was there any peer with an overwhelming

<sup>1</sup> Winstanley, *Lord Chatham and Whig Opposition*, pp 212-16

<sup>2</sup> *Newcastle and Election of 1734*, p 487

<sup>3</sup> Porritt, *op cit.*, pp. 354-58. Also Winstanley, *op cit.*, pp 221 and 213 n.

<sup>4</sup> Courtney, *op cit.*, p. v.

<sup>5</sup> Morgan, *op cit.*, p. 53

<sup>6</sup> Namier, *op cit.*, p 128

<sup>5</sup> Porritt, *op cit.*, p 6

<sup>7</sup> Porritt, *op cit.*, p 309

<sup>8</sup> Namier, *op cit.*, p. 165.

personal influence: for 101 seats were distributed among fifty peers, and a further ninety-one seats among fifty-five commoners. The most powerful noble, the Duke of Newcastle, had only seven boroughs under his personal control, and the most powerful commoner (E. Eliot) had only six. Even the Government itself controlled only thirty-two seats, "not all of them very safe."<sup>1</sup>

The position of the patron was almost always to some extent uncertain, and rarely permanent. In 1708 Mr Baylis purchased the patronage of Thetford, yet his return was expected to be "but a litigious one, for Sir John Woodhouse will be petitioned against him."<sup>2</sup> In 1757 Bath "had recently got free from the patronage of Sir Robert Henley."<sup>3</sup> At Winchelsea, Newcastle's manager built up so strong a personal interest that he commanded one of the two seats independently of his master.<sup>4</sup> In 1804 Helston revolted from the patronage of the Duke of Leeds, though he regained control of one seat again in 1807 and of the second in 1812.<sup>5</sup> In Harwich, a Government borough, there were conflicts between the Treasury and the Post Office, and the Ministers and Managers tried to convert the Government interest into a personal one.<sup>6</sup> In 1734 Lewes, though under the control of Newcastle, was almost lost by the slackness and tactlessness of his candidates.<sup>7</sup> In Rutland, the Duke of Rutland and the Duke of Newcastle nominated one member each, yet "even their united interest had to stand a severe contest in 1754 against that of a local clergyman, Dr Wilson."<sup>8</sup> Granville wrote, in 1708, that the elections where he had influence had not all gone as he desired,<sup>9</sup> and at Camelford, though the Duke of Bedford had the power of nomination, he described elections as "an inconvenience which I must at all times wish to avoid."<sup>10</sup>

The patron's position often uncertain and rarely permanent

<sup>1</sup> Namier, *op cit*, p. 174.

<sup>2</sup> Morgan, *op cit*, p. 334.

<sup>3</sup> Porritt, *op cit*, p. 336.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 343.

<sup>5</sup> A Patronage Feud in a Pocket Borough. H. Spencer Toy, *History*, July, 1930.

<sup>6</sup> Namier, *op cit.*, p. 441.

<sup>7</sup> Newcastle and Election of 1734. *EHR*, vol. xii, p. 480.

<sup>8</sup> Namier, *op cit*, p. 129.

<sup>9</sup> Morgan, *op cit*, p. 335.

<sup>10</sup> Porritt, *op cit*, p. 334.

The power  
of patrons  
due to

(a) popular  
respect for  
the upper  
classes,

(b) their  
ability and  
industry,

Much of the influence of these patrons was due to their social prestige and the traditional respect paid to the upper classes. It was in part based upon "kindly interest, ancient and affectionate recollections, and local and traditional respect." The willingness of the people to elect members of noble families and their friends was very marked. In the election of 1761, twenty-three eldest sons of peers were returned.<sup>1</sup> Even in the counties which were most free from influence, sixteen sons of peers and nine country lords were returned, and "forty-nine of the county members can be said to have inherited their seats."<sup>2</sup> The patron had also to have some ability, considerable industry, and a retinue of zealous agents to maintain his position. Wharton was in some ways a popular character, and he devoted a large share of his money and time in managing his boroughs. Newcastle also spent his life in the study of the management of constituencies. Even in the rotten Cornish borough of Tregony Harley "busied himself,"<sup>3</sup> and Newcastle "for at least nine months before the elections, through his agents in the different counties which he could influence, prepared the ground and mollified the electors for the coming contest." He maintained an almost daily correspondence with his agents and had to deal even with the "exact method in which some individual recalcitrant voter should be treated."<sup>4</sup> And even then the patron could very rarely succeed without the assistance of the Crown. The influence of Newcastle was to a considerable extent due to his position at the Head of the Treasury and to his control of the royal powers of patronage: he was High Steward and later Chancellor of Cambridge University, Admiral of Sussex, Warden of Sherwood Forest, and all these offices had powers of patronage associated with them. Though he thought his power attached to him personally, he soon discovered after his dismissal that his personal influence was small when he had been deprived of the assistance of the Crown.

This assistance might be given in various ways. The Crown had an unlimited power of creating peerages, and between

<sup>1</sup> Namier, *op. cit.*, p. 5

<sup>3</sup> Morgan, *op. cit.*, p. 332

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 90 and 91

<sup>4</sup> *EHR*, vol. xii, pp. 453-4

1760 and 1821, 209 promotions were made.<sup>1</sup> The Crown chose the bishops: between 1762 and 1783 there were 224 appointments to bishoprics, 89 of these being translations.<sup>2</sup> There were numerous Crown livings and others handed over to it by bishops or secular patrons: in 1762 a list of Royal patronage was prepared and it included the appointment of the two archbishops at salaries of £7,000 and £4,500 per annum, of the 24 bishops at salaries up to £6,000 per annum, of 23 deans at salaries up to £1,800 per annum, and of 9 prebends with salaries of £350 per annum: 22 prebends were in the gift of the Lord Chancellor.<sup>3</sup> The Crown controlled all appointments in the Army and Navy, in the Parliament of 1754 there were 50 army officers, and in that of 1760 there were 64. The officials of the country were Crown nominees: the population was increasing; taxes were collected by national revenue officials instead of by municipal officials. There was therefore a large increase of the Civil Service: the Crown had at its disposal posts in the admiralty, in the excise and inland revenue departments, in the post office, as well as clerkships in London. In 1714 there were 271 office-holders in Parliament,<sup>4</sup> and in 1761 there were 170 in the Commons alone.<sup>5</sup> Government contracts and shares in Government loans had also to be disposed of: a man might build a ship for £4,000 or £5,000 and lend it to the Government at £400 a month in wartime.<sup>6</sup> The paymasters of the Forces, the Navy and the Ordnances had balances under their control which they used for their own transactions. The receiverships of the Land Tax provided merchants and bankers with deposits: the underwriting of Government loans was also a lucrative undertaking. There were contracts for cloth, grain, iron, timber and food to be issued.<sup>7</sup>

All this Crown patronage was used as a means of supporting the Administration, by winning the support of borough patrons, who would use their influence to bring in members favourable to the Government; a peerage or a

(c) the support of the Crown and the use of Crown patronage

<sup>1</sup> Porritt, *op. cit.*, p. 327

<sup>2</sup> Turberville, *House of Lords in Eighteenth Century*, p. 423

<sup>3</sup> Fortescue, *Correspondence of George III, 1760-83*, vol. 1, p. 11.

<sup>4</sup> Porritt, *op. cit.*, p. 215

<sup>5</sup> Namier, *op. cit.*, p. 266.

<sup>6</sup> Porritt, *op. cit.*, p. 217

<sup>7</sup> Namier, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-61.



sinecure was their recompense for the expense and trouble they incurred.<sup>1</sup> After the election of 1784 there were seventeen promotions to peerages. Owing to his influence over three members George Selwyn became Surveyor-General of the Crown lands which he never surveyed, Registrar of the Chancery at Barbados which he never visited, Surveyor of Meltings and Clerk of the Irons in Mint, where he went once a week to eat a dinner at the public expense.<sup>2</sup> There were 126 place-men in Parliament in Anne's reign,<sup>3</sup> 200 in the Commons in the reign of George II, and 172 in 1770.<sup>4</sup> In 1784 there were 456 offices which were tenable with seats in Parliament, and there were 77 place-men in the Lords and 170 in the Commons.<sup>5</sup> Even the King's printers received their patent on condition that one of them should obtain a seat in the Commons.<sup>6</sup>

The Government also uses its powers of patronage in its own interests in the constituencies

Crown patronage gave the Government a large measure of control over the constituencies, to such an extent that, in 1784, Robinson, the Treasury manager, estimated that whereas Pitt had 149 followers and the hope of 104 more, after the election he could be provided with 253 followers and the hope of 116 more. The clergy were expected to assist in the elections, supporting the Government candidates, and influencing the electors in much the same way as the Press does today. Dr. Barton was recommended to the Duke of Newcastle for the Deanery of Worcester on the ground that "his friends and relations have a very good interest in that county" and because he was "a good Wigg."<sup>7</sup> When a vacancy occurred in a living under the control of the Bishop of London in 1750, the King insisted that "the living is given to a good Whig"<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Parli. Papers of J. Robinson* (ed. Laprade), pp. 24 and 26

<sup>2</sup> Porritt, *op. cit.*, p. 330. For an interesting account of the life of Selwyn see J. H. Jesse, *George Selwyn and his Contemporaries* (London, 1843). Selwyn was born in 1719 and died in 1791; he was a most curious character, with a passion for attending public executions

<sup>3</sup> Morgan, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

<sup>4</sup> Porritt, *op. cit.*, p. 219

<sup>5</sup> *Parli. Papers of J. Robinson* (ed. Laprade), pp. 9 and 12

<sup>6</sup> Porritt, *op. cit.*, p. 218

<sup>7</sup> *E.H.R.*, vol. vii (1892), "Clerical Preferment under the Duke of Newcastle" (Miss M. Bateson), p. 686.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 691

In 1695 the Bishop of Carlisle wrote a circular letter to the clergy requesting them to urge their parishoners to support Sir John Lowther and Sir Christopher Mulgrave as knights of the shire.<sup>1</sup> The revenue officials who had votes totalled 11,500.<sup>2</sup> At Queensborough, a borough with 400 electors, the Government secured its influence by paying £18,000 per annum for services which could have been obtained for £600. At Harwich, of the thirty-two electors, seventeen were in minor Government offices, others were relatives of officers, two or three were on the waiting-list for office and had been provided with pensions in the meantime.<sup>3</sup> In 1782 Lord Rockingham stated that seventy elections depended on the votes of place-holders in the excise, customs and postal departments.<sup>4</sup> "All the freemen of Maidstone were employed in the dock," and knowing that their posts depended on their voting for the Government candidate, some wrote to Newcastle that those who had actually promised their votes to the Opposition candidate before the Government candidate was announced "may have some assurance, and that too a publick one given them, that they shall not suffer by fulfilling their engagements"<sup>5</sup> At the election at Westminster in 1774, Lord Delaware, the colonel of the first troop of horse guards, was instructed by the King "to have the horse and grenadier guards privately spoke to for their votes in favour of Lord Percy and Lord Thomas Pelham Clinton"<sup>6</sup> At the Westminster election in 1784 "280 royal guards marched to the poll and voted in a body for Wray—a groom of the king's chamber announced that he came to vote for Wray on a mandate from the Lord Chamberlain's office on pain of dismissal."<sup>7</sup>

Whilst, then, it is convenient to speak of the price of a borough, it is evident that the price paid to a patron for a nomination was a mere part of the price of securing a return. Corruption was much more complex and widespread

The meaning  
of the  
"price" of  
a borough

<sup>1</sup> Porritt, *op. cit.*, p. 297.

<sup>2</sup> *E H R*, vol. xii, p. 472.

<sup>3</sup> Namier, *op. cit.*, p. 462

<sup>4</sup> Porritt, *op. cit.*, p. 74

<sup>5</sup> Namier, *op. cit.*, p. 142

<sup>6</sup> Donne, *Letters of George III to North*, vol. II., p. 423.

<sup>7</sup> William Pitt and Westminster Elections W T Laprade, *Amer. Hist. Rev.*, vol. xviii (1913), p. 259.

and the relative unimportance of money bribery

than the mere sale of seats "The price which a candidate paid at an election for a 'ready-made' seat to the patron or manager of a borough was usually but a part of the cost involved in its control"<sup>1</sup> The part played by the Government funds in elections has frequently been exaggerated, for open bribery was of comparatively little importance In 1734, 1741, and 1747, the years of elections, the amount expended from the Secret Service account was £117,145, £80,976 and £41,000 respectively A very large proportion of this was not used for election purposes<sup>2</sup> The election of 1754 cost the Government approximately £50,000,<sup>3</sup> and between 1754 and 1762, whilst Newcastle was at the Treasury, only £55,000 was expended on elections and the constituencies.<sup>4</sup> That this sum was an extremely small part of the total cost of the elections is clear from the fact that the Tories spent over £20,000 in the Oxfordshire election of 1754 alone, and the Whigs probably spent not less<sup>5</sup> Moreover, the £30,000 spent by the Government was spent for no more than twenty-four candidates, and most of it did not succeed in its object<sup>6</sup> "The money expended by the Government in general elections constituted only a small addition to the official patronage and to the vast sums spent openly year after year on voters and members, through offices, sinecures and contracts"<sup>7</sup> The bulk of the cost of elections was borne by patrons who recouped themselves by securing honours or rewards from the Government. It was not until 1777 that the King began to set aside £1,000 per month for election expenses Between 1779 and 1781, over £103,000 was spent out of the King's Private account,<sup>8</sup> but only £72,000 was spent on elections and re-elections<sup>9</sup> The election of 1780 cost the Government alone £50,000, and in 1784 it was estimated that the cost of securing 137 seats would be £193,000<sup>10</sup>

The enormous cost of patronage to borough owners was

<sup>1</sup> Namier, *op cit.*, p 201.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p 202

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, *op cit.*, p 290

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 268

<sup>5</sup> *Parli Papers of J. Robinson* (ed Laprade), p 57.

<sup>6</sup> Porritt, *op cit.*, p 416.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p 242

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p 290

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 251

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p 259.

due to the fact that the electorate was rarely negligible, constituencies had to be managed not merely in election years but at all times, electors had to be won and their friendship retained. Agreements between patrons had to be kept secret, "to prevent the mutiny of the generality of the Freemen, who are always averse to such peaceable doings"<sup>1</sup> At Dover, though the Government influence was dominant, there was a complaint against the nomination of candidates "without any ways consulting the inclinations of the Corporation" At Taunton 250 voters had to be given 29s each, a dinner had to be provided after the election and a piece of plate presented to the Mayor, at a cost of £105<sup>2</sup> At Seaford, a close Treasury borough, only "a dinner to the gentlemen, a double fee to the Ringers, and a double portion of Beer to the populace" were needed<sup>3</sup> At Malmesbury, Brice Fisher was assisted to election by judicious placing of contracts with local clothiers<sup>4</sup> At Bedwin voters secured £5 each and the payment of debts, or orders for spinning wool at 20s per lb<sup>5</sup> At Penryn a breakfast was needed to win the voters, and "in the slang of Penryn, the word 'breakfast' came to be synonymous with a bribe of £24"<sup>6</sup> Even professorships and fellowships at Universities were asked for in return for votes. In fact, it was the voters who were anxious for elections, and patrons who wished to avoid them. For instance, at Coventry, the landlord of "The Bull" tried to induce Mr Waring to stand for the borough so that there might be a contest in 1768<sup>7</sup> At Penryn a club was formed in 1805 to manage elections to the best advantage of the electors<sup>8</sup>

The electorate rarely neglected,

but the electors are often bought

Hence "corruption was not a shower-bath from above, constructed by Walpole, the Pelhams or George III, but a water-spout springing from the rock of freedom, to meet the

Corruption is therefore complex

<sup>1</sup> Laprade, "Public Opinion and the General Election of 1784" *EHR*, vol xxxi (1916), p. 233

<sup>2</sup> *EHR*, vol xii, p 456

<sup>3</sup> *EHR*, vol xii, p 464

<sup>4</sup> A Mid-Eighteenth Century Merchant Namier, *EHR*, vol xlii (1927), p 523.

<sup>5</sup> Morgan, *op cit*, p 112

<sup>6</sup> Courtney, *op cit*, p 23

<sup>7</sup> Namier, *op cit*, p 133

<sup>8</sup> Courtney, *op cit*, p 26

demands of the People. Political bullying starts usually from above, the demands for benefits from below, the two between them made eighteenth-century elections"<sup>1</sup> Thus freemen had begun to exclude their poorer brethren from elections in the seventeenth century. Aristocrats then found it worth while to become honorary freemen of boroughs with a narrowing franchise and to buy the support of electors.

and is not  
confined to  
small  
boroughs.

Nor was it the large boroughs which were free and the small boroughs which were corrupt. The small boroughs more readily fell under the control of patrons, the larger towns and counties were free only in the sense that they were usually independent of the overwhelming influence of a particular individual or family. Local territorial influences were often as definite a hindrance to the freedom of the voter as in a small borough. In 1761 Gloucester had as many as 1,500 voters, yet violence and drink made the elections a travesty of freedom: similarly Westminster, with its 12,000 voters, was a prey to violent factions who tyrannised over the electorate: the 1,500 freemen of Coventry were largely won by the distribution of local charities and the manoeuvres of their Whig returning officers.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, in 1761 Bath, a borough with only thirty-two electors, returned William Pitt and Field-Marshal Ligonier, who were opponents of corruption. The individual elector in a small borough had often to be more closely considered, and often commanded a higher price than a voter in a larger borough. Robert Pitt had to pay as much as £100 for the vote of one of the ten electors at Old Sarum.<sup>3</sup> John Hodge, a freeman of Grampound, extracted £120 from the two patrons of the borough in the six years preceding the election of 1754, and each party had to spend about £2,100 on the borough.<sup>4</sup>

Politics are  
local in  
character

Much of the ease with which boroughs fell under the influence of patrons was due to the local nature of politics. There were no parties in the modern sense of the word, and

<sup>1</sup> Namier, *op cit.*, p. 128.

<sup>2</sup> Memoirs of Ed. Hopkins, M.P. (M. D. Harris), *E.H.R.*, vol. xxxiv. (1919), pp. 496-7.

<sup>3</sup> Morgan, *op cit.*, p. 113    <sup>4</sup> Namier, *op cit.*, pp. 431 and 433.

divisions of opinion on matters of national importance were rare. In these circumstances an election became a mere contest between local factions, not for principle or programme, but for benefits. In Bristol and Maidstone the names Whig and Tory were mere labels for local religious parties: at Harwich political differences were little more than the opposition of Davies, the head of the local Customs office, and Hines, the head of the local Post Office Department.<sup>1</sup> At Newcastle "party" issues were the development of the Tyne trade, and a dispute between the corporation and burgesses regarding the letting of the Town Moor.<sup>2</sup> Burke declared, "I could not have believed how very little the local constituents attend to the general public line of conduct observed by their member. They judge of him solely as their special agent."<sup>3</sup> It was therefore the custom of boroughs to offer their seats to those who would do most for local interests. At Winchester the candidates promised to establish a fund to lend money to poor tradesmen free of interest. In 1709 the candidate ordered 2,000 pairs of shoes from Ilchester: in 1722 the Corporation of Banbury demanded the paving of its streets, the enlargement of the Vicarage and the establishment of a school. Tewkesbury demanded £1,500 from each candidate for the repair of its roads,<sup>4</sup> Oxford demanded the liquidation of local debts, amounting to £5,670.<sup>5</sup> It was also usual to expect the member to obtain the offices of the district controlled by the Government for local people.<sup>6</sup>

and  
boroughs  
expect local  
favours from  
their mem-  
bers

On the other hand, this selling of seats was encouraged by the growing competition for them. This became even keener after the Septennial Act had lengthened the lives of Parliament to seven years. There were always candidates ready to pay for seats which were vacant.<sup>7</sup> Some wished to obtain a seat for the sake of the social prestige which attached to membership of the House, others because a seat was the door to a peerage, a place or a sinecure: some went

The advan-  
tages of  
membership  
lead to  
competition  
for seats.

<sup>1</sup> Namier, *op cit*, p. 462. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, *op. cit*, p. 120. <sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p. 111.

<sup>4</sup> Porritt, *op cit*, pp. 159-61. <sup>5</sup> Namier, *op cit*, p. 161.

<sup>6</sup> See Porritt, *op. cit.*, p. 293, and Namier, *op cit*, p. 110.

<sup>7</sup> See Letter of North to J. Robinson, *Papers of J. Robinson*, p. 24.

into the House to secure a commission in the army or navy, or advancement in the legal profession: others became members to obtain Government contracts. Another privilege of a member was his immunity from the payment of postage, a privilege which he frequently used on behalf of his firm. Some members were in the House to escape a criminal suit or bankruptcy proceedings. Some sought election to make their name as rulers of the nation; even reformers at the end of the century began to traffic in seats in order to forward their schemes. Membership of the Commons became an easy step to the establishment of a family on the nation. Philip Yorke became Lord Chancellor, secured the Crown office for his son Charles, and the chafewax (a clerkship in the Chancery) for his son John. Charles in time became Solicitor-General, his brother, Joseph, became aide-de-camp to the King and later ambassador at The Hague. The youngest son, James, had three canonries in succession and a deanery and became Bishop of Ely.<sup>1</sup>

Agreements  
between  
patrons are  
frequent

While patronage and influence were so widespread, politics were bound to be personal. There were no real parties, for "the political history of England . . . is very largely that of the quarrels and alliances of various aristocratic factions or family connexions. The names Whig and Tory are quite misleading as explanations of party conflicts."<sup>2</sup> For instance, an agreement between Newcastle and Lord Aylesford led Newcastle to support a "Tory" candidate at Maidstone in 1761, while he supported a Whig at Canterbury. Similarly the "Tory" members for Bishop's Castle (Salop) "had no more in common with the two Tory knights of the shire than with Lord Powis's group of Shropshire Whigs."<sup>3</sup> Agreements between the leaders of the family groups were frequent,<sup>4</sup> and so Whigs became Tories or Tories became Whigs as their leaders decided to

<sup>1</sup> P. C. Yorke, *Life and Correspondence of Earl of Hardwicke*, reviewed by W. Hunt in *EH R* (1914), p. 68. See also description of Thos. Sergison's family, Namier, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Turberville, *House of Lords in Eighteenth Century*, p. 483.

<sup>3</sup> Namier, *op. cit.*, p. 306.

<sup>4</sup> See *Parliamentary Papers of J. Robinson*, pp. 48 and 53, and *Amer. H. R.* (1913), p. 274.

join the Court or the Opposition. As a result of these agreements patrons often avoided the expense of election contests and the number of elections which actually came to a poll was small. In 1761 only forty-eight constituencies out of a total of 315 were contested<sup>1</sup> in 1768 there were only seventy-one defeated candidates; in 1744, 113, in 1780, ninety-two, and in 1790, ninety-six.<sup>2</sup> The counties, in particular, rarely went to the poll: in 1747 only two, in 1754 only five, and in 1761 only three did so.<sup>3</sup> Between 1760 and 1800 there were seven general elections, but of all the fifty-two counties of England and Wales returning a total of 644 members, there were only fifty-seven defeated candidates.<sup>4</sup> In 1761 there were eleven contests in the twenty-two boroughs with over 1,000 voters, twelve in those with 500 to 1,000 voters, and only eighteen in the other 202 boroughs.<sup>5</sup> Contests were usually rare in the small boroughs where influence was well established

and contested elections are comparatively rare

Patronage in the eighteenth century was, then, extremely complex, and neither permanent nor unchanging: it was the result of many considerations, its power varied from place to place and from time to time. Nor was it based upon the influence of the money of a Venetian oligarchy, for money was only one of the factors upon which it depended, and the oligarchs, who appeared to be in command, were dependent upon their constituents, who are more easily ignored now than they were then. Eighteenth-century corruption was possible not only because of the willingness of the aristocracy to buy voters, but also because of the readiness of the local constituencies and of individual voters to sell their votes.

Patronage is complex and the power of the aristocracy rarely independent of the voters

Parliaments of the eighteenth century were often tyrannical, frequently out of touch with public feeling, and sometimes even jealous of its expression. Though Parliament inserted a clause asserting the right of the people to petition in the Bill of Rights, that was the right to petition only the

§ 5 The Member of Parliament

Parliament often out of touch with public opinion,

<sup>1</sup> Namier, *op cit*, p. 196.

<sup>2</sup> *E H R.* (1916), p. 196.

<sup>3</sup> Namier, *op cit*, p. 82.

<sup>4</sup> *Parli Papers of J. Robinson*, pp. x and xi.

<sup>5</sup> Namier, *op. cit.*, p. 104.



King. When the Kentish men petitioned Parliament to vote supplies for war with France, Parliament imprisoned several of the petitioners. In 1710 the Bill imposing a landed property qualification on members was an attempt to make Parliament the representative of the landed aristocracy and to exclude the moneyed men. The Peerage Bill was an attempt to establish the power of the existing aristocracy over the constitution of the House of Lords. The passing of the Last Determination Acts and the hearing of election petitions were conducted in the same spirit of resistance to popular pressure. The insistence on the privileges of Parliament, particularly of the privilege of freedom from arrest, the action taken against Wilkes, the refusal to allow the secrecy of Parliamentary proceedings to be prejudiced by the reporting of business or by the admission of strangers, all show how jealous Parliament was of outside influences.

but never  
independent  
of it

Yet Parliament was never entirely impervious to public opinion. When popular feeling was roused it was usual for members even for close boroughs to consult their constituents. After the fall of Walpole, over forty constituencies instructed their members to press for an enquiry into his conduct.<sup>1</sup> The Government had to be particularly careful not to force members for nonconformist constituencies to vote against the Bill for the Relief of Dissenters in 1772.<sup>2</sup> Many of the members for counties and large boroughs were under an obligation "of honouring their constituents by voting for Wilkes" against the Court party. Though Parliament did not fairly represent the nation as a whole, yet it did fairly represent the dominant and politically conscious class at a time when the working classes were still politically dormant. It was not only rotten boroughs which elected relatives of the aristocracy: the counties and large towns were almost equally anxious to have aristocrats as their representatives, and middle-class men were rarely chosen even by free constituencies.<sup>3</sup> Nor was there a particular type of member who occupied the seats for close or even

Parliament  
fairly re-  
presents the  
politically  
conscious  
class

<sup>1</sup> Porritt, *op cit*, p. 268

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 276-7.

<sup>3</sup> Namier, *Eng in Age of Amer. Revol.*, pp. 253-4.

Cornish boroughs: in fact, of the forty-two members returned for Cornish boroughs in 1761, no less than six had previously represented counties, the most independent of constituencies.<sup>1</sup> Had influence been less extensive and the franchise wider, there is little reason to suppose that the character of the Commons would have been materially different.

Nor were the members mere ciphers who could be depended on to vote invariably with their leaders. They usually had many interests to serve, and they were rarely so completely dependent on any one, and so fully independent of all others, as to be able to act merely at the command of their superiors.<sup>2</sup> Nor was the member nominated by a patron usually much worse off than those returned by counties and large boroughs. Members were expected to follow the wishes of their patrons, but the submission exacted was often general only. Burke discovered that members for counties and large boroughs had to consider the requests of their constituencies at least as thoroughly as those who represented "rotten" boroughs.<sup>3</sup> Probably the members of eighteenth-century Parliaments were not less independent than present-day members controlled by their party leaders. Moreover, the amount and the influence of bribery has often been exaggerated. In 1754 there were only 124 pensions paid, and of those eighty-three were paid to women, ten or twelve to male foreigners, and not more than two to members. No money was paid out of George II's privy purse in pensions, and the amount paid out of the Secret Service Account was small. Between 1754 and 1760 only fourteen or fifteen members had Secret Service pensions: the amount spent between 1757-61 affected only twenty-nine members, and totalled only £49,550. Many of these pensions were continued after their recipients had left Parliament or had failed to obtain re-election. In 1761, seventeen peers received £47,300 in pensions, but they were not borough owners, and in the whole Secret Service fund "there

The members are not mere ciphers,

nor are they controlled by bribery

<sup>1</sup> Namier, *op cit*, p. 371. See also pp. 105-134, 436.

<sup>2</sup> Namier, *op cit*, pp. 185, 187, 189. See also Namier, *Eng in Age of Amer. Revol.*, p. 233.

<sup>3</sup> Porritt, *op. cit.*, p. 270.

was more jobbery, stupidity and human charity than bribery."<sup>1</sup>

Merit is re-  
warded in  
the House,

The eighteenth century Parliament was not indifferent to merit. "In fact, personality, eloquence, debating power, prestige, counted for more in the eighteenth-century House of Commons . . . than it does now unless the 'Whips' are taken off"<sup>2</sup> Hence Newcastle, in 1756, and Rockingham, in 1766, found it easier to acquire a majority in the House than to preserve it without an efficient leader. The Government therefore could not afford to neglect merit, and many of the smaller boroughs where influence was strong were used to bring in men who could ill afford the expense of election in larger and more open constituencies. Walpole, both Pitts, and the Earl of Hardwicke sat for close boroughs, and the numerous seats in the southern part of England provided openings into Parliament for "professional politicians, civil servants, and big merchants, for the administrative and commercial classes concentrated in London"<sup>3</sup> It may be true that of the 600 members returned by Cornwall in the reign of George III, "the representatives eminent in literary or political life can be counted on the fingers of the hands,"<sup>4</sup> yet it is also claimed that the Cornish boroughs were "a waiting-room for rising men and a refuge for those on the downward path"<sup>5</sup> Moreover, of those who entered Parliament, a very large percentage were able to obtain some office, on the one hand, this encouraged competition for seats, but on the other, it maintained a close connection between Parliament and the practical administration of the country.

and close  
boroughs  
often pro-  
vide seats  
for useful  
men unable  
to face more  
hotly-con-  
tested seats

Patronage is  
used to  
maintain  
discipline

In the absence of party organisation, the use of patronage was employed to maintain discipline in the House. Members returned by the use of Government patronage had to vote for the Government, men returned by the exertions of a patron were expected to vote for him in the House. There is little difference between this and the working of the party machine today In 1784 Soame Jenyns wrote: "A Minister .

<sup>1</sup> Namier, *Structures of Politics*, p. 290. See also pp. 233, 242, 267, 268, 273, 275

<sup>2</sup> Namier, *op. cit.*, p. 11

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81

<sup>4</sup> Courtney, *Parli. Rep. of Cornwall*, p. xxi

<sup>5</sup> Namier, *Structure of Politics*, p. 372

must be possessed of some attractive influence to enable him to draw together these discordant particles, and unite them in a firm and solid majority, without which he can pursue no measures of public utility with steadiness and success. An independent House of Commons is no part of the English constitution."<sup>1</sup> In the reign of Anne, a Secretary to the Board of Admiralty was dismissed for opposition to the Royal candidate for the Speakership. Newcastle advised Colonel Pelham to resign his seat because he declined to answer his whip, in 1763 Newcastle, Grafton and Rockingham were deprived of their Lord-Lieutenancies and in 1770 Shelburne, Barré, Calcraft and Conway were dismissed from their various posts for opposition to the Court. In 1809 Castlereagh informed the member for Cashel that he must vote with the Government or resign his seat.<sup>2</sup> Administrations were by these means provided with the majorities necessary for carrying through the measures they decided upon.

and to facilitate the passage of business

Before the morality of members is condemned, it is necessary to recall that they received no pay for their services. Wages had been paid to members by their constituents, but this practice had ceased in the seventeenth century. Instead they came to believe "that those who dedicated their time and fortune to the service of the Government should be entitled to a share of the rewards that are in its disposal."<sup>3</sup> The local nature of politics, the competition for seats, the determination of the constituencies and of individual constituents to make profits out of their representation, made the winning of a seat and the maintenance of influence a costly business. Even election fees were sometimes high: at Winchelsea, where there were thirteen voters, the fee of the returning officer in 1811 was £200; at Westminster the returning officer's bill amounted to over £1,478,

The member is rewarded for the trouble and expense of election

<sup>1</sup> *Thoughts on a Parlt. Reform*, pp 20-21, quoted from Namier, *Structure of Politics*, p. 265

<sup>2</sup> See Morgan, *op cit*, p 132. Porritt, *op cit*, p 315. Winstanley, *Pers and Party Govt*, pp 143 and 203. Porritt, *op cit*, p 347

<sup>3</sup> J. Garth writing to Newcastle, 1757. Quoted from Namier, *op cit*, p 263

and at Banbury, when there was no contest, the town clerk still had to be paid over £109<sup>1</sup>

Chief fault of Parliamentary system—the mentality of the century

In fact, the basic fault of the eighteenth-century Parliamentary system was not the mere maldistribution of seats or the narrowness of the franchise, but the mentality of the age. Seats had acquired a quasi-proprietary character; representation was not regarded as a privilege or as a duty, but as a method of pecuniary advantage. The member who obtained a seat set out to recompense himself for the expenses incurred, to make a profit for himself, to secure benefits for his family and his friends, and to satisfy the multifarious demands of his constituents and their friends

§ 6 Parliamentary Reform

Attempts to reduce the influence of the Crown

The Place Acts

Abortive Acts against corruption

Agitation for reform continued throughout the century. At first, reformers were chiefly opposed to the influence of the Crown. Three Place Bills were introduced in the reign of William, but did not become law: there was a clause in the Act of Settlement which excluded place-men from Parliament, but this was repealed in 1705. In that year an Act was passed whose effect was to make members who accepted high offices after their election seek re-election, and to disqualify holders of minor offices from retaining their seats. This left 270 place-men in the Commons, and the Place Act of 1742 only reduced that number to 200: in 1770 revenue officers were disqualified from voting and in 1782 Government contractors and other place-men were excluded from Parliament. By 1820 there were only ninety place-men with seats. The subject of pensions had received less attention: in 1702 they were limited to the life of the Sovereign, in 1760 they were made chargeable on the Civil List, and in 1782 their gross amount was restricted. All these measures left the Government influence still very strong.

A few attempts had been made to reduce electoral corruption. Peers were forbidden to interfere in elections: in 1763 limitations were placed upon the creation of freemen for electoral purposes, and in 1809 an Act was passed against the sale of seats. These Acts, however, effected very little improvement, and more success attended Pitt's attempts to reduce corruption.

<sup>1</sup> Porritt, *op. cit.*, pp. 182-97.

The agitation for the reform of Parliament itself had begun as early as the reign of James I, and continued sporadically into the eighteenth century: after the passing of the Last Determinations Act, however, it had little hope of success. The American Revolution revived and widened the movement for reform: the County associations sprang into being, Chatham advocated an increase of the representation of the counties, Wilkes urged the disfranchisement of rotten boroughs and the increase of the representation of London, the counties and the rich boroughs. In 1780 the Duke of Richmond proposed that Parliament should be elected by universal suffrage, and that equal electoral districts should be established. Major Cartwright founded the Society for Promoting Constitutional Information. In 1788 determinations of the Commons in disputed elections ceased to be final. Between 1770 and 1804 the franchise in three boroughs was enlarged by Parliament. Industrial towns had also begun to support the demand for reform: as early as 1774 Manchester was contemplating buying a seat and returning a member who would champion its claims, and in 1780 Birmingham made a great effort to elect Sir Robert Lawley as knight of the shire.<sup>1</sup> In 1782 the Reform movement won the support of Pitt, but the French Revolution and the outbreak of war changed his attitude. The agitation continued and deepened, but little change in the Parliamentary system was effected, and not only the aristocracy but also the unbiassed governing class became firmly opposed to reform.

Agitation  
for a general  
reform of  
the electoral  
system

In spite of the aristocratic character of the eighteenth-century Parliament, legal changes of a popular nature were made. The judges were made independent of politics, since by the Act of Settlement they held office during good behaviour. The independence of the jury had been established shortly before the Revolution, and jurors were no longer liable to be tried for perjury if they brought in a wrongful verdict. The Treason Law was modified in 1696, and the prisoner was entitled to receive a copy of the indictment and a panel of the jury some days before the trial, and

§ 7 General  
Reforms.

Independence of  
judge and  
jury

Modifica-  
tions in the  
law of  
Treason.

<sup>1</sup> Porritt, *op. cit.*, p 263.

Illegality of  
general  
warrants

he was given the right to be defended by legal counsel and to compel the attendance of witnesses<sup>1</sup> In 1702 the right of producing witnesses, who might be examined on oath, was extended to prisoners in cases of felony The so-called Riot Act of 1715<sup>2</sup> also limited the Treason Act by withdrawing riots from its jurisdiction and in 1795 treason was further defined and limited The case of Wilkes established the illegality of general warrants, and prevented the continuance of a tyranny comparable to that of the *lettres de cachet* in France The reform of the criminal code began early in the nineteenth century, though many of its antiquated provisions remained until far into the nineteenth century. In 1813 insolvent debtors were allowed to obtain a discharge by giving an account of all their debts and properties: they were thus saved the horrors of the debtor's prison.

The freedom  
of the press  
and the Law  
of Libel.

The freedom of the press was established in 1695 Equally important were changes made in the law of libel. In the early part of the eighteenth century any attack on the Administration might readily be construed as libel, and the publisher of what would now be regarded as perfectly valid comment on Government policy exposed himself to severe penalties. The attempt of the judges in cases connected with No. 45 of the *North Briton* to restrict the jury to the determination of publication, leaving the more material question of whether a libel had been committed to be decided by the judge alone, was challenged in both Houses and in the courts. Fox's Libel Act (1792) enacted that the jury in a libel case was entitled to determine the guilt of the whole case, and not the mere fact of publication.<sup>3</sup> It was still possible for the Government to prosecute those who opposed it, but the jury was in a position to defend the liberty of the subject. When the French Revolution drove Pitt into the repression of popular opinion and the prosecution of many of the reformers, the juries refused to be intimidated and frequently brought in verdicts of acquittal The subject was also secured a speedy trial by the Habeas Corpus writ:

<sup>1</sup> See Grant-Robertson, *Select Statutes*, p. 140

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 196.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 272.

though the procedure provided by the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended some nine times in the eighteenth century, "there was never anything like a general suspension of the action of the writ in all cases." Only persons charged with specific offences, such as treasonable practices, were denied the privilege of the writ

Finally, the part played by the local gentry in the effective administration of the country in the eighteenth century can hardly be exaggerated. Though Parliament frequently had important business to transact, imperial relations to adjust, foreign policy to regulate, the supervision of industry to attend to, much of its business was petty and local. In 1786 Parliament passed 160 public Acts and sixty private Acts, but many of the so-called public Acts referred to such strictly local affairs as the establishment of a workhouse at Havering, the erection of a house of correction in Middlesex or the paving of the streets of Cheltenham. Private Acts included an Act allowing Cornelius Salvidge to take the name of Tutton and an Act dissolving the marriage of Jonathan Twiss and Francis Dorrill<sup>1</sup>. The age of Parliamentary regulation of the detail of industry, social services, and local government had not yet arrived. Hence Parliament was to the mass of the people much less important than the local squire, and the corruption of Parliament had a comparatively slight effect upon the actual administration of the country.

§ 8 *Local Government*

Work of Parliament often unimportant

The squires were local landlords, closely allied with the local clergy: they possessed great social prestige in their localities. They frequently acquired almost a complete control of the management of their parishes, where they were responsible for the maintenance of the peace, the repression of vagrancy, the relief of poverty, the upkeep of the roads, the levying of soldiers and sailors. They levied local rates and spent "not far short of one-fifth of the budget of the national government itself",<sup>2</sup> they could oblige any householder to become a churchwarden, an overseer, or a local surveyor or constable, and they could compel a man to

Effective administration of the country carried out by the squirearchy.

<sup>1</sup> Maitland, *Constitutional History*, p. 383

<sup>2</sup> S. and B. Webb, *English Local Government*, vol. 1, p. 4



Importance  
of the  
Justices of  
the Peace

Their  
judicial and  
administra-  
tive work

labour on the roads for six days in the year. Single justices had the right to issue warrants, to deal with cases of petty crime such as assault, hedge-pulling and non-payment of wages, and the power of issuing orders to the local surveyors of highways. A pair of justices could make orders for the levy of local rates and grant licences to ale-houses. Divisional, Petty and Quarter Sessions combined judicial and administrative work, determining a mass of lesser criminal and civil suits, issuing directions for the upkeep of highways, bridges and prisons, supervising the policing of the counties and levying county rates. These local benches of magistrates had subordinate powers of law-making and the right of trying cases in which their own regulations had been broken. They could prevent hawkers attending fairs and revels, and so ruin their trade; they could disqualify publicans from holding local offices; they controlled the distribution of poor relief and had a wide discretionary power over the regulation of wages. In 1689 Quarter Sessions, as the county administrative authority, were spending less than £100,000 per annum, but by 1835 the amount spent reached over £1,000,000.<sup>1</sup> The increase of the powers of the local magistrates was effected partly by the delegation of tasks to them by Parliament, partly by their gradual accumulation of the rights previously belonging to the local populace. Whilst therefore the eighteenth century was the age of the great landed aristocrats in Parliament, it was also the age of the wide authority of the local gentry in the country.

<sup>1</sup> Webb, *op. cit.*, p. 481.

## CHAPTER XII

### RELIGION AND PHILANTHROPY IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

THE Revolution thwarted the political designs of Catholicism in England. Catholics were excluded from the throne by the Bill of Rights, and evasion of the Tests was prevented by the abolition of the dispensing and suspending powers. Catholics were excluded from the benefits of the Toleration Act, so that their religious services were illegal, and in 1700 a more severe Act was passed, forbidding Catholics to educate their children except in their own houses or to send them abroad to be educated, and preventing them from inheriting or purchasing land. They were excluded from politics by the Tests, they might not enter the Services, the legal profession or the Universities. There was little actual persecution, however, though in 1722, after the discovery of Atterbury's plot, the Catholics were subjected to a special tax. In 1778 a Catholic Relief Act was passed: priests were no longer liable to punishment for conducting their services, the automatic succession of a Protestant son to the estate of a Catholic father was abolished, and Catholics were no longer disabled from purchasing land. Popular resentment led to riots in Scotland and to the Gordon Riots in England, but these were quickly suppressed. In 1791 Catholics were admitted to the legal profession from the rank of barrister downwards; a legal toleration was extended to Catholic worship and Catholic schools: Catholics were no longer to be obliged to take the Oath of Supremacy or the declaration against transubstantiation, but their chapels and schools had to be registered.

Disabilities  
of the  
English  
Catholics  
not removed  
by the Re-  
volution,

but  
toleration  
gradually  
extended to  
them in the  
eighteenth  
century.

As the reward for their share in the Revolution the Dissenters were granted freedom of worship. William introduced a Comprehension Bill into the Commons, providing for the use of a new Prayer Book so revised that Dissenters

Dissenters  
gain free-  
dom of wor-  
ship.

The Tolera-  
tion Act,  
1689

But the  
Tests are  
maintained.

The Angli-  
can Church  
weakened  
by the  
secession of  
the Non-  
jurors

and by the  
silencing of  
Convoca-  
tion, 1717

would have been able to unite with Anglicans. Parliament refused to consider this Bill before it was passed by Convocation in the usual way and as William realised that Convocation would never agree to such a Bill, the measure was abandoned. But the Toleration Act was passed, which allowed Dissenters to worship in freedom: Unitarians were not included in the benefits of this Bill. As the Tests were not withdrawn, Dissenters were still legally prevented from entering Parliament or the Services. Further attacks upon them were made by the passing of the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts under the rule of the Tories at the close of Anne's reign, but these were repealed in 1718, and from 1727 onwards annual indemnity Acts were passed which freed Dissenters from the penalties they incurred by sitting in Parliament. Several attempts were made to repeal the Test and Corporation Acts, but Anglican feeling was too strong, and the Tests remained until 1828. One other extension of toleration was made in 1813, when Unitarians were granted freedom of worship.

The position of the Anglican Church was unsatisfactory. The exaction of the oath of allegiance to William from all the clergy led to the resignation of Archbishop Sancroft, five bishops and over 400 clergy. The secession of these non-juring clergy and their followers deprived the Established Church of some of its most fervent and capable members. In 1701, on the death of James, they might well have returned to the Anglican Church, but they were compelled to subscribe to an oath of abjuration, repudiating the claims of James's son, and this most of them refused to do. But gradually they abandoned their religious exile, and after the death of Anne their importance ceased.

In 1717 Convocation was silenced. Hoadly, Bishop of Bangor, had by writing and preaching minimised the dignity of the Church and asserted the supremacy of the State. Convocation, which in the reign of Anne had allied itself with a Tory Commons against the Whig aristocracy, prepared to attack Hoadly. The Government intervened, Convocation was prorogued, and though it met at the beginning of each Parliament, the Crown withheld the authority without

which it could not proceed to business. Not until 1850 did Convocation meet to transact business. The Church was therefore deprived of the means of formulating its opinions or regulating its discipline, and whilst the views of the hierarchy were adequately represented to the Government by the bishops, those of the lower clergy were never effectively put forward.

In religious controversy the Church proved itself well-equipped. It was attacked by the Deists, who "thought that there was no need of a revealed religion, because the religion of nature is sufficient,"<sup>1</sup> and by the anti-Trinitarians, who denied the need for Creeds and Canons of the Church, provided the doctrines of Christ as revealed in the New Testament were believed. Both controversies were old, but they were revived with great vigour shortly after the accession of the Hanoverians. Archdeacon Waterland, Rector of Walesby in Lincolnshire, made himself famous by his able defence of the Church against the anti-Trinitarians, William Law and Joseph Butler, later Bishop of Durham, made reputations by attacking the Deists. These controversies proved that the Church was well supplied with intellectual ability, and that in an age of reason it could easily maintain its position. But these disputes absorbed the energies of the Church, distracted its attention from the need of reform and the pursuit of piety, and the triumph in debate was followed by the reign of a somewhat complacent quiescence.

The Church overthrows the Deists and the anti-Trinitarians,

In such an atmosphere abuses remained unchecked, and of these none was greater than the subordination of the Church to the State. After the Revolution, since the supremacy of Parliament was established, the chief task of the Government was to maintain for itself a favourable Legislature. To do this it needed the assistance of the bishops in the House of Lords and of the clergy in their parishes. Bishoprics and livings became therefore the rewards of political service, and as the Whigs were in favour, Latitudinarian clergy were favoured. The Sacheverell

but fails to check ecclesiastical abuses

(1) Subjection of the Church to the State.

<sup>1</sup> Overton and Relton, *History of English Church* (1714-1800), p. 34.

trial and the silencing of Convocation showed how closely the Church was related to politics: it became immersed in secular business and controlled by secular interests. It was dominated by reason, and was opposed to outbreaks of religious zeal or "enthusiasm": it wished for peace even at the expense of fervour. The religious interest of Anne was followed by the indifference of the first two Georges: and though Parliament had granted £350,000 for the building of churches in London in 1711, only twelve were completed.

(2) Pluralities and non-residence.

Pluralities and non-residence were almost accepted evils. Hoadly, though Bishop of Bangor for six years, never visited his diocese. Bishop Butler of Bristol, one of the more zealous prelates, had a living in the north of England: Wilcocks was both Bishop of Rochester and Dean of Westminster. Hannah More found that the Vicar of Cheddar lived at Oxford, his curate lived at Wells, and none of the thirteen adjacent parishes had a resident clergyman: in fact, the only resident clergyman in the district was the Vicar of Axbridge, and "he is intoxicated about six times a week."<sup>1</sup> In 1803 an Act was passed to allow the bishops to sanction the non-residence of their clergy, and in 1812, of 10,000 incumbents nearly 6,000 were non-resident.<sup>2</sup> The duties of the parish were very frequently neglected. The clergy were poor, and many of them became the subservient dependents of local landowners, and lost the spiritual leadership of their parishes. The Church had a narrow outlook: it neglected not only the needs of the poorer classes at home, but also those of the colonies. Not until 1784 was any bishop appointed to officiate outside Britain; and the problems created by the Wesleyan movement were never faced until the retention of the Methodists within the Church had become impossible.

(3) Neglect of the parish

(4) Poverty of clergy and dependence on secular patrons.

(5) Narrow outlook of the Church

Bishop Gibson a typical eighteenth-century prelate.

In several ways Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London, was typical of the best eighteenth-century prelates. Born of humble parents in 1669, he was educated at Queen's College, Oxford, became chaplain to Archbishop Tenison and the protégé of the Bishop of Lincoln. He became Bishop of

<sup>1</sup> Balleine, *Hist. of Evangelical Party*, p. 154.

<sup>2</sup> J. B. and L. Hammond, *Village Labourer*, p. 221.

Lincoln in 1716 and Bishop of London four years later. He was a scholar of considerable eminence: he published a translation of Camden's *Britannia*, several works on Anglo-Saxon, and a monumental work on *The Statutes, Constitutions, Canons and Articles of the Church of England*.<sup>1</sup> He also used his learning to attack the Deists and Free-thinkers. He was a thorough Erastian and a politician: he championed the hierarchy of the Church against Atterbury and denied that the Lower House of Convocation had rights equivalent to those of the Commons. He became Walpole's ecclesiastical adviser, but whilst he promoted friends of the Government in the Church and secured the support of the clergy to Walpole's administration, he also secured the appointment to sees and livings of men of satisfactory morals and doctrine. As Bishop of London he enforced strict living and attacked the scandalous masquerades then popular. In 1736 he violently opposed the Quaker Relief Bill and lost Walpole's favour. Passed over when the Archbishopric of Canterbury was vacant in 1737, he declined that office when it was offered ten years later, as he was then too old to fulfil the duties satisfactorily. He died in 1748.<sup>1</sup>

Education also was in a poor condition. The numbers at the universities were declining; the curriculum failed to provide for modern subjects, and remained overburdened with the teaching of the classics and ancient philosophy: professors frequently did not lecture, though college tutors were often industrious. Many of the public schools also were decadent: numbers of the grammar schools were decayed, and only nineteen new ones were founded between 1702 and 1760, of which eight were established in Anne's reign. The education of girls was almost completely neglected, and apart from the charity schools and Nonconformist academies no provision had been made for the lower classes. Cruelty was common, executions and even the burning of women were popular entertainments. Lancashire was notorious for

Decadence  
of education.

<sup>1</sup> See *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, 1929, "Bishop Gibson and Sir Robert Walpole" (Rev. N. Sykes).

“bull-baiting, cock-fighting, and pitched fights between naked men shod in iron-tipped clogs”<sup>1</sup>

But zeal is  
not entirely  
lacking from  
the Church  
nor morality  
from the  
nation

Yet it would be easy to exaggerate the vice of the eighteenth century. The intellectual attainments of the clergy as a whole were good; and though non-residence and pluralities were common, there can be little doubt that many of the country clergy were zealous and painstaking in attendance to their duties. The vices of the upper classes were often open and easily satirised, but there is little ground for a general attack upon the nation as a whole.

The early  
life of Wes-  
ley.

A great ecclesiastical revival began before the middle of the century. John Wesley, the son of the zealous High-Church Rector of Epworth, Lincolnshire, and of Susanna, a very strict and religious lady, was educated at Charterhouse School and Christ Church, Oxford. He was ordained as a clergyman of the Church of England, was elected a Fellow of Lincoln College, lectured in Greek and preached frequently in Oxford. Returning in 1729 from Epworth, where he had been serving as his father's curate, he found his brother Charles already the centre of a religious circle at Oxford. By 1733 fifteen of the “Methodists” were meeting nightly to read the classics and the Greek Testament: they attended Communion service regularly every week, they visited prisons and the sick, and distributed their money liberally among the poor. The strictness of their life naturally made many of the undergraduates ridicule them, and the term Methodist was applied to them in mockery.

The Oxford  
Methodists

The  
Wesleys’  
conversion.

In 1735 Charles Wesley was ordained, and he and his brother set sail for Georgia as chaplains of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, hoping to lead a mission to the Indians. Their design proved impracticable, and in 1736 both returned disappointed. While in London, John attended a religious society meeting in Aldersgate Street and met the Moravian preacher, Peter Bohler. He was immediately converted, and after a brief visit to the Moravian settlement at Herrnhut, returned to London to preach in

<sup>1</sup> Wadsworth and Mann, *The Cotton Trade and Indust. Lancashire*, p. 391.

various churches, to speak at religious society meetings, and to visit the prisoners of Newgate and Oxford. His brother, Charles, was converted also, and joined him whole-heartedly in his work. Meanwhile the work of the Methodists was being furthered by George Whitefield. Eleven years younger than John Wesley, and seven years younger than Charles, Whitefield was born at the Bell Inn, Gloucester, where he served behind the bar. Having gone up to Pembroke College, Oxford, he had joined the Methodists, had been ordained in 1736, and had begun to preach in Gloucester. At Wesley's request he had left for Georgia on the day before Wesley returned, and spent sixteen weeks in a fruitless mission. After his return to England, Whitefield began to preach to the colliers of Kingswood, Bristol, in the open fields, as the churches had been closed to him. Wesley, after a moment of disapproval, followed his example, and when Whitefield moved to London, Wesley took his place at Bristol. Wesley founded the Wesleyan Society which met at Fetter Lane, but in 1739 he had to remove to the Foundry at Moorfields. In 1742 he began to preach in Newcastle, visited Birstal, near Leeds, where John Nelson had already been working, and began the conversion of the West Riding. Charles was equally active, preaching in Wednesbury, Leeds and Newcastle, and capturing Cornwall by his earnestness. In 1747 Wesley paid his first visit to Ireland; in 1751 he went to Scotland for the first time; and in 1768 the first Methodist chapel was established in New York.

George  
Whitefield

Preaching  
in the open  
fields begun

The Wes-  
leyan  
Society

Wesley was travelling about 5,000 miles each year, and preaching fifteen sermons each week. Charles was scarcely less active: until his marriage he travelled almost as far as his brother, preaching hardly less frequently and certainly not with less zeal. He contributed about 6,500 hymns to the Methodist movement, an achievement of permanent importance. Whitefield was undoubtedly the most eloquent preacher; he had "a fine presence, attractive features and a magnificent voice."<sup>1</sup> Wherever the Methodist preachers went, conversions followed. the meetings were often accom-

The earnest-  
ness of the  
Methodists.

<sup>1</sup> Abbey and Overton, *Eng. Church in Eighteenth Century*, p. 338.



panied by physical demonstrations, even nobles exclaiming, others fainting and writhing in agony. At Whitefield's sermons, "ten thousand—twenty thousand, hearers hung breathless upon the preacher's words. Rough colliers, who had been a terror to their neighbourhood, wept until the tears made white gutters down their cheeks—black as they came from the colliery—and, what is still more to the purpose, changed their whole manner of life and became sober, God-fearing citizens in consequence of what they heard: sceptical philosophers listened respectfully, if not to much purpose, to one who hardly knew what philosophy meant; fine gentlemen came to hear . . . ; shrewd statesmen . . . were induced to give first copper, then silver, then gold, and then to borrow from their friends."<sup>1</sup> Less dramatic, somewhat less tense, but almost equally effective were the preachings of the Wesleys.

The Wes-  
leyans  
separate  
from White-  
field.

Their connection with Whitefield was short. A dispute had begun when Whitefield visited America in 1738 regarding their attitude to Calvin's doctrine of predestination, which Whitefield accepted, but which Wesley denied, and on Whitefield's return he established himself at the Tabernacle, Moorfields. A reconciliation followed, but each went his own way, and from 1743 the followers of Whitefield were recognised as Calvinistic Methodists. Whitefield travelled through England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland, and paid several visits to America: returning from America in 1748, he became chaplain to the Countess of Huntingdon. In 1764 the separation from Wesley was completed, and after a further series of missions Whitefield died in 1770. The Countess of Huntingdon, who had attached herself to the Methodists at Fetter Lane in 1739, became a patron to many of the evangelicals, established chapels at most of her residences, and spent about £100,000 on religion. She had under her patronage no less than sixty-four chapels and a college for training clergy, but in 1781 she was obliged to register her chapels as dissenting chapels, and the separation of her connection was complete.

The  
followers of  
the Coun-  
tess of  
Huntingdon.

Wesley's chief aptitude was for organisation, and it was

<sup>1</sup> Abbey and Overton, *op. cit.*, p. 337.

his ability which made his organisation so effective. He realised that those who were converted needed some permanent guidance to maintain the effect of the preaching, and so he began to organise Wesleyan societies wherever his preaching had won him a following. These he placed under men whose devotion he could trust: he had been familiar with similar Church societies from the days of his youth, and he intended them to be helps to the Church, not rivals. Members of these societies met during the week for religious meetings, and in some cases for preparation for the services of Sunday: they never replaced the offices of the Church. In 1743 Wesley drew up a series of rules for his societies, ensuring uniformity of practice, and members began to make voluntary weekly contributions for the development of the work. In 1744 a conference of Wesleyan leaders was held at the Foundry and the appointment of lay assistants where necessary was agreed upon. This conference became a regular annual meeting of Wesleyan preachers, and in 1784 it was formally established and recognised.

The Wesleyan organisation

Wesley always insisted on regarding himself and his followers as loyal Churchmen, and he never ceased to exhort them against separation. In 1777 he declared: "We do not, will not, form any separate sect, but from principle remain, what we have always been, true members of the Church of England."<sup>1</sup> Yet in spite of his words, many of his actions tended towards separation. He cared little for mere orthodoxy of opinion: he was so attached to his mission that he felt it justified irregular action, so that he preached in the parishes of even evangelical clergy to their annoyance. In 1784 he consecrated Dr. Coke and Francis Ashbury as superintendents for America: in 1785 he appointed three lay readers to administer the sacraments in Scotland: in 1786 he appointed others for Ireland and the West Indies: and in 1789 three for England. His death in 1791 removed the chief check upon separation, and three years later the right of celebrating the Supper in their own chapels was officially granted to ninety-three Methodist societies. By 1797 the independent organisation of the movement was

and the steps towards separation from the Church of England.

The separation completed

<sup>1</sup> Abbey and Overton, *op. cit.*, p. 328.

complete in that year the power of the Circuit quarterly meeting to make arrangements for the support of the local preachers was recognised: the local preachers were to be accepted by the local preachers' meeting, and an annual statement of accounts was to be published

The numbers of Methodists and their diffusion.

At Wesley's death the Methodists numbered 100,000; there were 294 preachers in Great Britain, 198 preachers and 43,000 members in the United States, and nineteen missionaries and 5,000 members at mission stations. As early as 1786 there was a society with 1,100 negro members in Antigua; Dr Coke greatly extended the influence of Methodism in America, a mission was despatched to Ceylon in 1813, and a branch Missionary Society was founded at Leeds.

Divisions within the Methodist movement

Methodism did not long remain a united movement. The separation of Whitefield has been noticed: in 1770 the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists, who had at first been helped by Wesley, and who had later accepted the leadership of Whitefield, formally declared their independence. In 1796 Alexander Kilham was expelled from the Methodist ranks, and with 5,000 followers set up the Methodist New Connexion. About 1806 the Independent Methodist Churches were founded, and between 1807 and 1810 the Primitive Methodists established their independence.

The permanent influence of Methodism. Its effects

(1) on morality,

(2) on the Church,

(3) on Dissent,

(4) on the lower classes,

But the influence of Methodism was permanent. In an age of reason the Methodists had appealed to emotion: though they brought forward no new doctrine, they revived the feeling for personal religion. Their mission was directed against vice, luxury and pomp, and it succeeded in effecting an improvement of morality. Wesley had little influence upon the Established Church, except to increase its abhorrence of "enthusiasm" and its resistance to popular revivals, but Methodism revived the earnestness of the Dissenters and largely increased their numbers, for whereas in 1700 Dissenters numbered one in twenty-five, in 1800 they numbered one in four.<sup>1</sup> Wesley's influence chiefly affected the lower classes, particularly those of the north and the new industrial towns. On the one hand, his teaching stimulated

<sup>1</sup> F. W. Cornish, *Eng. Church in Nineteenth Century*, p. 5.

feelings of sympathy and benevolence and strengthened movements for the relief of the artisans at a time when charity was specially needed Wesley and his followers wished to abolish slavery and reform prisons: they tried to educate the masses, supplying them with cheap but good literature; they distributed their wealth to the poor, Wesley himself spending £14,000 a year. On the other hand, Wesley was a conservative on the side of order: the Methodists, unlike the Dissenters, showed no sympathy with the French Revolution They urged the justice of obedience to the established order; they discouraged violence and popular agitation

(5) on  
charity,

(6) on  
politics

Meanwhile a religious revival had begun which was more definitely connected with the Church of England At many places, particularly in the north, the Midlands, and the west, clergy were taking a renewed interest in spiritual religion. Their learning was small, but their earnestness was great They were similar to the Methodists in this, in their hostility to the theatre and dancing, in their insistence on simplicity and spontaneity and in their philanthropic intentions But they stood more firmly by the Articles, the Prayer Book, and the parochial system. They "had no philosophy but Christ crucified, no Church system beyond that of the Church of England, with a general benevolence towards all Protestant sects, and no learning to meet the attacks of Deism and Liberalism."<sup>1</sup> William Grimshaw established himself at Haworth in 1742, Henry Venn at Huddersfield in 1759, Joseph Milner at Hull Evangelicals in the west were Fletcher of Madeley in Shropshire, Richard Symes at Bristol and Samuel Walker at Truro In the Midlands there were John Berridge of Everton, John Newton and Thomas Scott at Olney in Buckinghamshire. At the universities, the Evangelical Movement was represented by Isaac Milner, Charles Simeon and Joseph Jowett at Cambridge, by Crouch and Daniel Wilson at Oxford The Movement began to win favour in London when William Romaine established himself at St. Anne's, Blackfriars. The Clapham Sect was founded by John Venn, the son of

The Evan-  
gelical Move-  
ment in the  
Church of  
England

Its charac-  
teristics

and leaders

<sup>1</sup> Cornish, *op. cit.*, p 10

the Vicar of Huddersfield, and himself Rector of Clapham, with the support of John Thornton, Wilberforce, Zachary Macaulay and James Stephen.

The influence and defects of Evangelicalism.

These Evangelical clergy revived earnestness within the Church, set an example of piety and self-sacrifice, contributed a good deal to religious literature by their hymns and their popular writings, and stimulated philanthropic and missionary enterprises. They formed comparatively compact groups in Yorkshire and in Cornwall, but elsewhere they were isolated individuals, and in the south and south-east they were few. They never formed an organised movement with common objects or common resources. This was one of their weaknesses. They were also without any great scholarship, so that they made little impression upon the uppermost ranks of society, and they made little permanent contribution to literature. In so far as their philanthropy led them to attack vested interests, like those of the slave-traders, they were unpopular. But gradually the sympathy of the Government was gained: in 1811 the Government voted £1,000,000 for the building of churches, and in 1815 the first Evangelical bishop was appointed.

A revival of High Churchmen.

A revival had also begun amongst High Churchmen, the leaders being Jones of Nayland and Joshua Watson. Watson, with Henry Norris, the incumbent of Hackney, and William Stevens, a London tradesman, formed the "Clapton sect": they were as charitable as the Evangelicals, they were studious men of sober life who distrusted personal experience as a basis of religion, and emphasised the importance of tradition and Church history. They were violently opposed to schism, insisted that the English Church was descended directly from the Apostolic Church, and exalted the dignity of the priesthood. They became "a rallying point for all orthodox Churchmen who wished for clear definition of doctrine and increased activity in Church work, combined with steady political conservatism."<sup>1</sup>

The revival of religion coincided with a development of philanthropy, and in many cases directly assisted it. The attack on slavery had been begun by the Quakers, and

<sup>1</sup> Cornish, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

in 1774 Pennsylvania excluded from membership all slaveholders who would not free their slaves. In 1772 the decision of Chief Justice Mansfield that slaves were freed by landing in the British Isles ended slavery in Britain. The cause of the slaves had been taken up by Granville Sharp, the grandson of Archbishop Sharp, Queen Anne's adviser, and he was assisted from 1785 by Thomas Clarkson. In 1787 a Society for the abolition of the slave-trade was founded, and this was supported by Wilberforce and the rest of the Clapham sect. Wilberforce was then twenty-eight years old: the son of a Hull merchant, he had been educated at Cambridge, had been left independent by the death of his grandfather and uncle, had entered Parliament as member for Hull, and later for Yorkshire, and had renewed the friendship of Pitt which he had won at Cambridge. He was popular in society, and was a member of several fashionable clubs; he gambled with Pitt, and led a life of luxury and gaiety. But in 1784, after a journey to Nice with Dr. Isaac Milner, he became a convert to Evangelicalism: he began to abandon his life of hilarity, though his good humour and ready wit never left him; he joined the Clapham sect, founded a society for the reformation of manners, and devoted himself to the anti-slavery movement. Clarkson travelled 35,000 miles to collect evidence against slavery. Wilberforce used his position in Parliament and his friendship with Pitt to further the movement for abolition. By 1790, 74,000 slaves were being transported annually, of whom 38,000 were carried on British ships: 192 ships sailing from London, Bristol and Lancaster shared the trade and brought fortunes to their merchants. Of the negroes who were captured in Africa 12½ per cent. died in the West Indian harbours, and not more than 50 per cent. lived to be effective labourers. Their life on the plantations was often hard, and always uncertain: the power of their masters was entirely arbitrary, though it was to their interest to use them well. In 1788 a Committee of the Privy Council was set up to conduct an enquiry into the slave-trade, and in the next year Wilberforce introduced his first motion for abolition. In spite of constant checks, he kept up his

The movement for the abolition of the slave trade.

The career of Wilberforce

The extent and evils of the slave-trade.

agitation until, in 1806, the first step towards abolition was taken. While Grenville and Fox were in power, a Bill was passed to prevent British slave-dealers supplying other countries, and to prohibit the importation of slaves to British colonies. A Bill was also passed forbidding the use of any new vessel in the trade, and in 1807 the slave-trade was abolished. Four years later it was made a felony, punishable with transportation, to traffic in slaves, and this act effectively ended the slave-trade. Denmark and the United States had already abolished their slave-trade, the French slave trade was ended in 1815, and by the Peace of Vienna all the allied powers agreed that the slave-trade should be abolished as soon as was possible. The slave-trade was gradually abolished by the European nations, and in 1833 the slaves in the British Empire were given their freedom. Wilberforce lived just long enough to see this measure passed by Parliament.

The slave-trade abolished by England, 1807,

and by many other European nations

Missionary enterprise

The Evangelical revival also produced considerable missionary enterprise. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel had been founded in 1701, and had organised many missions in America: but it had laboured under many hardships, and its work had been continually hampered by lack of sympathy from the English Government. A London Missionary Society was formed in 1795 by Evangelicals and Dissenters, but this did not work easily, and in 1799 the Church Missionary Society was founded by the Evangelicals, including Wilberforce, Granville Sharp, and Zachary Macaulay. In the same year the Religious Tract Society was established to develop the work of Hannah More in supplying the poor with good literature: within the first nineteen months 752,000 tracts had been sold, and in the next year over a million were sold.<sup>1</sup> The British and Foreign Bible Society was founded in 1804, and a London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews in 1809.

Schemes of education:

The Evangelicals also interested themselves in the development of education. The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, which was founded in 1698, had established

<sup>1</sup> Balleme, *op. cit.*, p. 167.

a large number of charity schools: by 1704 there were fifty such schools in London, and by 1750 there were more than 2,000 in the country. They accommodated boys and girls between the ages of seven and twelve, who were taught reading, writing and the catechism, and some craft, such as the spinning of wool, which would fit them for apprenticeship in industry. The teachers had to be members of the Church of England and to be licensed by the bishop. But by the middle of the century the number of charity schools ceased to increase, and the schools began to decline.<sup>1</sup> Sunday schools were started at Catterick as early as 1764, but they were popularised by Robert Raikes, the editor of a Gloucester newspaper, who set up his first school in Gloucester in 1780. Sunday schools soon sprang up all over the country, and in 1785 the Sunday School Union was established. These schools gave instruction in reading and writing as well as in religion. Schools were founded in the Cheddar district by Hannah More, who was assisted by Wilberforce. Joseph Lancaster, a Quaker, set up a day school at Southwark, where he gave non-sectarian teaching, and in 1808 he founded the Lancastrian Society for the establishment of un-denominational schools throughout the country. This Society was the nucleus of the British and Foreign School Society, which was founded in 1814. Meanwhile Dr. Andrew Bell, the Rector of Swanage, had begun schools connected with the Church of England, and in 1811 the National Society for the Promotion of Education in the principles of the Established Church was founded. This became a powerful society, responsible for the erection of "national" schools, its president was the Archbishop, and it had influential supporters in both Universities. In 1807 Samuel Whitbread, a Nonconformist supporter of the movement for the abolition of the slave-trade and of Parliamentary reform, introduced a Bill for the establishment of national education by parochial schools, supported by voluntary contributions. This Bill was defeated, but the cause of education was later cham-

(1) Charity schools;

(2) Sunday schools,

(3) The Lancastrian Society;

(4) The National Society.

<sup>1</sup> See the summary of a thesis on "The Development of Charity Schools, 1700-1800," by H. J. Larcombe in *Bulletin of Inst. of Hist. Research*, vol. VI (1928-9), p. 185.



pioned by Brougham, who, in 1816, applied for a select committee to enquire into the state of education.

Prison re-  
form

Efforts were also made to reform the prison system. The condition of the prisons was incredibly bad, and as the criminal code and the law applying to debtors were both extremely severe, the number of people committed was large.<sup>1</sup> Men and women were crowded together; the prisons were filthy; often no beds were provided; vice was rampant; and the gaoler sold liquor to those who could afford to pay for it; no provision was made for the sick or the aged. In 1773 John Howard, the High Sheriff of Bedford, began visiting prisons, became shocked at the conditions he found, collected evidence, and presented it before the Commons. In 1777 a Bill was drafted to build penitentiary houses for the reform of the criminal by solitary confinement, well-regulated labour and instruction. Howard died in 1790, but his work was continued by Elizabeth Fry, a Quaker lady of strict upbringing, who began visiting Newgate as early as 1813, and who founded an Association for the Improvement of Female Prisoners in Newgate in 1817.

begun by  
John  
Howard

and con-  
tinued by  
Elizabeth  
Fry.

Reform of  
the Criminal  
Code at-  
tempted.

The severity of the criminal code was also attacked. In the days of Walpole there were 253 capital offences. Sir Samuel Romilly, Solicitor-General in 1806, advocated reform; in 1808 stealing, and in 1812 begging by a soldier or a sailor without licence ceased to be criminal offences. Several other Bills for reform were rejected.

Progress at  
the Univer-  
sities

Improvement began also at the universities. At Cambridge the mediæval exercises for a degree were in 1780 replaced by a written examination in the Senate House: John Jebb of Peterhouse advocated that the University should examine all its undergraduates annually. At Oxford the exercises for a degree were reformed in 1800 by the passing of the Public Examination Statute. There was a growing readiness at both universities to entertain modern studies: a prize was established at Cambridge for an essay in English on Economics, a Chair of Chemistry was founded in 1766, and a chair of English Law in 1788. At Oxford

<sup>1</sup> In 1805, 221 prisoners were committed to Bedford gaol, in 1807, 173 and in 1815, 383 (Hammond, *Village Labourer*, p. 192).

a chair of Anglo-Saxon was founded in 1795. Both universities also made renewed efforts to enforce discipline among their members, and none was more strict than Cyril Jackson, the Dean of Christ Church, Oxford. The universities benefited also by the gradual improvement of the public schools: Harrow, under the headship of Summer, and Rugby, under that of James, were beginning to establish their supremacy.

Finally, the English Utilitarians had begun to turn philosophy to the practical attack upon abuses. Bentham published his *Fragment on Government* in 1776, in which he criticised Blackstone's eulogy of the Constitution and his opposition to political reforms. His *Rationale of Punishments and Rewards* was published in French in 1811; in the *Defence of Usury* (1787) and the *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (1789) Bentham developed Adam Smith's doctrine of *laissez-faire*. From 1797 to 1798 he was working on a scheme for the reform of the Poor Law, and in 1809 he wrote a *Catechism of Parliamentary Reform* which was not published until 1817. In 1808 he was joined by James Mill, who readily accepted Utilitarian principles. The influence of Utilitarianism was more marked after the Napoleonic War was ended. Whatever its philosophical and ethical defects, it placed the wishes of the community above all other considerations, and although the Utilitarians were at first supporters of individualism, they soon became upholders of State action in the interests of the people as a whole. The clarity of their arguments, the terseness of their style, and the detailed schemes which they produced made them influential in the promotion of the political and social reforms of the nineteenth century.

The beginnings of English Utilitarianism

which produces practical schemes of reform

## APPENDIX

### SOUTH SEA BUBBLE

THE South Sea Company had been founded in 1711 to take over £9,000,000 of National Debt Stock from the Government. That is to say, South Sea Company Stock to that value had been raised by the Company and utilised by the Government to redeem its outstanding Stock. In return the Government paid the Company interest on the £9,000,000 at the rate of 6 per cent., with £8,000 per annum for management, and in addition granted it the monopoly of trade in the South Seas. In 1713 the Assiento trade, granted to England by Spain, was also handed over to the Company. Two years later the Company took over a further £1,000,000 of the National Debt. In 1719 the Company again successfully took over a portion of the Debt amounting to £1,202,702 8s, and made a loan to the Government of £544,142 os. 10d. Out of this transaction the Company made a profit of £72,800. The trading ventures of the Company were of little consequence, and indeed, its first ship did not sail until 1717, six years after its incorporation. The South Sea Company had become little more than a financial house, holding approximately eleven and three-quarter millions of Government Stock.

In 1720 it embarked on a larger financial venture. It proposed to take over the rest of the National Debt, amounting to nearly £31,000,000, consisting of annuities whose capital value was reckoned at just over £15,000,000 and redeemable debts amounting to nearly £16,000,000.<sup>1</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> An annuity is an annual payment, fixed in amount, paid for an agreed term of years, in return for a loan, of which the capital is not repaid. The capital value of an annuity is arrived at by reckoning it at a computed number of years' purchase. Thus a £100 annuity for ninety-nine years—i.e., a payment of £100 per year for ninety-nine years—was reckoned to have capital value of twenty years' purchase—i.e., £100 × 20 = £2,000.

Scheme was, in fact, merely one of Debt Conversion. Holders of annuities and Government Stock were to be given the opportunity to exchange these for South Sea Stock. On the £31,000,000 now converted, plus £11,750,000, the previous liability of the Government to the Company, the Government would pay interest at the rate of 5 per cent for four years and afterwards at 4 per cent. For the privilege of taking over the National Debt the Company would pay the Government £7,567,000. The financiers of that day would find little to alarm or surprise them in this scheme, except perhaps the size of the conversion: it followed closely on the lines of previous successful exchanges of Company for Government Stock, and the principle of "engrafting" (*i.e.*, the taking over of the Stock of one concern by another) was generally recognised and frequently employed.

The Government would gain the advantage of having only one creditor instead of many, and though during the four years it paid 5 per cent. interest it would lose £4,786 8s. 3d per annum or £19,145 5s in all, this was more than counter-balanced by the receipt of over £7,500,000 from the Company. After 1724, when it would pay only 4 per cent. interest, the Government would gain £305,030 14s 2½d. in addition to £117,500 saved by reducing the interest on the £11,750,000 Stock already held by the Company from 5 to 4 per cent.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Before the Scheme the Government's annual payments were

<i>Annuities</i>	£	s	d	£	s	d
99 and 96 years .. ..	667,705	8	1			
Lottery of 1710 . . .	40,670	8	0			
9 per cent . . . . .	81,000	0	0			
				789,375	16	1
<i>Interest on Redeemable Debts</i>						
	£	s.	d.			
5% on 11,795,466	5	4		589,773	6	3
4% on 4,128,752	7	4		165,150	1	9
				754,923	8	0
				1,544,299	4	1 p.a

After the Scheme the amount payable to the South Sea Company would be

1720-24 5 per cent on £30,981,712 6s 6d.=£1,549,085 12s. 4d. per annum, a loss of £4,786 8s 3d per annum

Subsequently .4 per cent on £30,981,712 6s. 6d.=£1,239,268 9s. 10d. per annum, a profit of £305,030 14s 3d. per annum

In addition, after 1724, the Government would save 1 per cent. on £11,750,000 already owing to the Company.

It would have no redeemable debts whose repayment might be demanded at the wish of the proprietor, though it is worth noticing that it exchanged responsibilities, some of which would have expired in 1742, and all of which would have expired before the end of the century, for responsibilities which could never be wiped out except by costly redemption.

The Company gained an increase of capital amounting to £31,000,000, on which it would receive a certain return of nearly £1,550,000 for four years and of nearly £1,240,000 afterwards, accruing from Government interest. It became virtually a Government Company, and the increase in public confidence was likely to be reflected in an increase in the value of its shares. Here was the crux of the scheme: the Government would gain by the Conversion; the Company did not intend to lose, and therefore the gain of the Government could only be at the expense of some part of the community. There was no hope of the Company utilising this enormous capital in trade; the interest paid would make possible only a moderate dividend, and the attraction of the scheme to the Company lay in the possibility of raising the value of its shares. Not only was the Company to take over Government Stock at terms advantageous to itself, but it was to issue additional capital of its own, out of which it intended to make large sums. The temptation to stock-juggling was a strong one—too strong for the Company Directors. It was estimated that with South Sea Company Stock at the quotation of 125, a profit of £480,000 would be made by the Conversion: but if that figure could be raised to 150, the profit would amount to £3,707,500.

The Company's offer was accepted by the Government after the Bank had tried unsuccessfully to outbid it. The scheme had been mooted on November 23, 1719; public interest in the Company was roused and was carefully fanned by the Directors. Fortunes were at this time being made rapidly by speculators in France, who subscribed to Law's Mississippi Company, whose 500 livre shares rose to 18,000 within a few weeks; and Englishmen were anxious to grasp the advantages of the magic of speculation. South Sea

Stock had risen by April 12 to 325, and then the Directors issued a First Money Subscription of £2,000,000 (raised subsequently to £2,250,000) at £300 per £100 share. Within a few days this was fully subscribed, and a Second Money Subscription of £1,000,000 (raised later to £1,500,000) at £400 per £100 share was issued. In June a Third Money Subscription was raised of £4,000,000 at £1,000 per £100 share, and in August a Fourth Subscription at the same rate was offered. All these, except the last, were fully subscribed, though the payments were to be spread over periods, varying from issue to issue, up to five years. Prices of Company Stock in the market surpassed even those at which new issues were made: in January shares sold at 128½; in April at 325; in May at 550; in June at 1,060. This was due in part to inexplicable and entirely unjustifiable speculation and in part to deliberate inflation by the Directors. Here were limitless opportunities for financiers to make rapid fortunes, to buy shares cheaply in January and sell out at fabulous prices in June: many a lord or merchant grew fat and prosperous within these months.

Under these circumstances the Company could offer apparently attractive terms to holders of Government Stocks, who naturally would be glad to share in this financial boom. The Company had agreed with the Government to offer twenty years' purchase for ninety-nine and ninety-six year, and fourteen years' purchase for shorter period, annuities. On April 28, after the issue of the Second Money Subscription, the Directors invited Government Stock holders to surrender in return for Company Stock, the exact terms of exchange not then being disclosed. On May 19, three weeks later, those terms were revealed: for every £100 Long Annuity, the Directors offered £700 Company Stock, reckoned at £375 per cent., together with a further bonus, which made it up to an apparent offer of £3,200—thirty-two years' purchase instead of the twenty years' purchase promised. On August 3, the Company made fresh offers to those who had not exchanged their annuities and to the holders of the redeemable debts. Holders of £100 annuities were now offered only £400 Stock but reckoned at

the higher rate (corresponding to the increased market price of Stock) of £800 per cent., which with bonus represented £3,600—thirty-six years' purchase: other annuitants were similarly treated.<sup>1</sup> Holders of redeemable debts were offered £105 Company Stock at £800 per cent for every £100. Those who had exchanged on the earlier occasion had had every opportunity to benefit by the rise in the value of their new Stock, those who waited till the second opportunity received less Stock for the same amount of Government Stock. Nevertheless a large share of the outstanding annuities and a high proportion of the redeemable debts were exchanged.

The Company had made the most of its opportunities. It had gained handsomely by the issue of new capital to the public at high premiums. After the crash, Walpole estimated the profits of these transactions at £15,450,000; but he must have been calculating the net profits available for the reorganisation of the Company, for the gross profits were far greater. By May, after the issue of only the First and Second Subscription Lists, the Company had made gross profits of £22,750,000 and net profits of £13,500,000. According to the agreed formula, the amount of National Debt exchanged for South Sea Stock was reckoned at

<sup>1</sup> For long annuities, for every £100 per annum:

	£	s.	d.
£700 Stock at £375 per cent. .. .. .	2,625	0	0
In bonds and money .. .. .	575	0	0

*I.e.*, 32 years' purchase .. .. . 3,200 0 0

The capital value of other annuities was similarly reckoned.

On the second occasion, for long annuities, for every £100 per annum:

	£	s.	d.
£400 Stock at £800 per cent. . . . .	3,200	0	0
In bonds and money .. . . .	400	0	0

*I.e.*, 36 years' purchase .. .. . 3,600 0 0

In future the subscriber would receive dividend on £700 or £400 respectively. Should he wish to sell £700 or £400 stock at market price, which reached £1,060 in June, he would then receive £1,060 × 7 or 4 = £7,420 or £4,240 (still retaining £575 or £400 in bonds or money).

Note how much more profit is made by the subscriber who exchanged his Government Stock on the first occasion (supposing he retained his Company Stock till the "peak" of the boom).

£26,817,335 5s. (and on that sum the Government would pay interest to the Company), but in fact the amount of South Sea Stock actually issued to former holders of Government Stock was only £18,929,047, and on this lesser sum the Company would have to pay dividend to its new creditors<sup>1</sup>

Now, however, the financial boom was suddenly followed by a gigantic financial crash. Speculation had begun at least six months before the South Sea Scheme was launched and had rapidly become widespread. Inspired by a mad fever for investment, and fired by tales of fortunes quickly made in France, the public had readily subscribed to many fantastic schemes. The companies floated grew in number from month to month, and also showed an increasing tendency to pursue purely speculative objects. In January, the capital issued amounted to £6,000,000: but in February, it amounted to £31,000,000: in the one week ending June 11, companies were formed with a nominal capital of £224,000,000. Their objects were amazingly diverse, ranging from insurance company projects to "planting mulberry-trees and breeding silkworms in Chelsea Park," for "importing jackasses from Spain," "for a wheel of perpetual motion" (this company had a capital of £1,000,000), for "carrying on an undertaking of great advantage, but nobody to know what it is," or "for furnishing funerals to any part of Great Britain" (capital £1,200,000). Speculation even in such shares was widespread, for men had "given up all pretensions to industry, in pursuit of an imaginary profit."

<sup>1</sup> Of £789,375 16s 10d annuities, £650,510 6s. 3d had been converted (about 82 per cent) (£491,461 2s 9d. on the first occasion and £159,049 3s. 6d. on the second).

Of £15,924,218 12s 10½d. redeemable debts £14,393,788 were converted (90 per cent.).

The annuities were exchanged for about £3,815,570 Company Stock and the redeemable debts for £15,113,477.

Total increase of capital by taking in Government Stock is £18,929,047.

For Government purposes the annuities subscribed reckoned at capital value of either twenty or fourteen years' purchase represent £12,423,547 5s.

Note 12½ million pounds (capital value) of annuities produce £3,800,000 South Sea Stock

Fourteen million redeemable debts produce £15,000,000 South Sea Stock.



Shares in Temple Mills Brass-works which were issued at £10 per share rose to £250 per share.

Soon came the collapse of the whole Stock market, which had become inevitable and which prudent men like Walpole had long foreseen. Only gradually did the collapse of Law's schemes in France, which had begun in May, react on England. Wise men began to sell their Stocks; the alarm caused by heavy selling could not long be postponed even by the intrigues of the Directors. The latter themselves then took fright, successfully agitated for an investigation to be held into the affairs of some of the recently formed companies, and induced Parliament to pass legislation preventing the floating of "bubble" companies. The public took up the panic, selling became heavier and heavier, the price of Stocks fell as rapidly as they had risen. In this débâcle the South Sea Company Stock merely took its share; Stocks quoted at 1,000 in August fell to 750 on September 2, to 280 on October 3, and reached their lowest mark at 124.

Some had made fortunes by selling shares for £1,000 which they had bought for £200, but many had also had to sell shares at £200 or even less, for which they had paid £1,000. Sir Justus Beck, one of the many bankrupt merchants, had a debt of £340,000, and could not pay 2s. 6d. in the £, the Duke of Wharton lost £120,000. The annuitants fared no worse than other subscribers. They had parted with their Government Stock in the hope of selling their South Sea Stock to their own advantage; if they retained their Stock till the slump came, they shared in the general rapid decline of Stocks.

In its panic the public called not for justice but for vengeance, and blamed everything but its own credulity. Men forgot that the speculator makes large profits that he may face large losses: they forgot that their buying of shares at such high prices had been insane, and that they had frequently been warned of the inevitable result. But though the public was largely to be blamed for its own misfortunes, the Company was equally guilty.

There had been deliberate inflation by the Directors, there

had also been malpractice—the allotment of Stock to friends of the Directors or to influential politicians, the issue of fictitious Stock, and the cancellation of Stock to conceal hasty selling. The Company had distributed £1,259,325 in bribes to the Government. Further, the issue of the Money Subscriptions at high premiums might fairly have been interpreted as a guarantee by the Company of the soundness of its shares; and the Directors had not hesitated to go to unjustifiable lengths to maintain public confidence. Thus immediately after the issue of the First Money Subscription they declared a dividend of 10 per cent., while in an attempt to stave off the slump in August, they promised a dividend of 30 per cent. at Christmas and a dividend of 50 per cent. for at least the twelve subsequent years. They had traded excessively on the speculation fever of the public, for since the Company's trade was small and not likely to increase greatly, with a capital of £38,000,000 it could not hope to remain long in a sound position. The sole hope of the Directors lay in the utilisation of public confidence to issue Stock at a high premium and so to make large profits. The danger from the over-capitalisation of the Company had from the start been apparent; it was said the Company would "fill the House of Commons and rule this little world," and that it would be so powerful as "in time to subvert our excellent constitution."

The feature of the scheme which causes most surprise is perhaps the way in which the Company itself encouraged speculation. In the eighteenth century, when a company issued new Stock, even at a very high premium, only a very small proportion, often less than 1 per cent., of the capital was actually called up. When the First Subscription List of the South Sea Company was opened, only 20 per cent. had to be subscribed at the time, the rest being called up in 10 per cent. instalments at intervals of two months. Thus a relatively small amount of cash could control Stock of very high nominal value, and a great stimulus was given to the sale and re-sale of Stock. In the week ending August 22, when Stock prices were still almost at their zenith, there were no less than 36,000 separate transfers registered by the

South Sea Company. The Company encouraged this wild speculation in Stock, by releasing on loan the funds it collected from the sale of Stock and by accepting its own interim dividends instead of cash instalments due. In this way the cash which had been called up on the First and Second Subscriptions was lent to Stock-holders, on the security of the Stock which they had already bought, but for which they had not yet paid, in order that they might invest it in further issues. Thus, though the cash called up on the two Subscriptions amounted to only £3,750,000, yet loans of £4,500,000 had been made; bribes and bonds issued to annuitants amounted to a further £4,000,000. To meet this deficiency in cash, the Third and Fourth Subscriptions were issued, but the policy continued of loaning the cash received, so that by the end of June the loans made by the Company amounted to £11,500,000. The "fund of credit" notion had been abused, so that credit was allowed without the least regard for security, and a large share of the Company's transactions were mere book-dealings, involving little transfer of actual Stock.

In regard to the annuitants, the Directors of the Company had contracted with the Government to give twenty years' and fourteen years' purchase for the Long and Short Annuities respectively, but they did not announce what price they would set on their own Stock which would be offered in exchange for Government Stock. Further, the Directors did not declare their terms until nearly a month after the books had been opened for the surrender of Government Stock, whilst on the second occasion the terms were revealed on the day after the books had been closed. Moreover, the argument that it was the common-sense duty of the subscribers to see that the terms offered were just, and to refuse to surrender their Government Stocks until satisfactory terms were disclosed, does not acquit the Directors on the charge of sharp practice. It has to be "remembered that all information that would enlighten the speculator was discouraged, while he was overwhelmed and too often carried away, by data designed to mislead him."

The Government itself could not entirely wash its hands

of responsibility for this disaster. It was not unnaturally attacked for lending support to the schemes of the Company, and for taking little precaution to safeguard the interests of its creditors. Moreover, the King's German mistresses, the First Lord of the Treasury, the Secretary of State, and the Postmaster-General had all received bribes. One hundred and twenty-two Lords and 462 members of the Commons (82 per cent of the House), had shared in the Company's speculation, and had made profits estimated at nearly £4,750,000.

As a result of this, Sunderland resigned, and Walpole became Chief Minister. The Secretary of State committed suicide, Stanhope died in the heat of debate. To restore credit Walpole, after proposing that the Bank and the East India Company should each take over £9,000,000 of the South Sea Stock, and that subscribers to the South Sea Company should accept Bank and East India Company Stock at a fixed figure as part of their holdings, introduced a settlement. The property of the Directors, valued at just over £2,000,000, was sold, and an allowance made to them of a little more than £350,000, the rest being used to meet the Company's liabilities. The Company's capital was written down, and the Government released it from the obligation to pay for the privilege of taking over the National Debt. It has been reckoned that annuitants received approximately half the amount of Stock they originally held.

The Company continued to exist as a trading Company, making fairly constant losses, and gathering a mere £3,226 profit from the Assiento trade. With the collapse of the Bubble it became of little historical importance<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This account is based on W. R. Scott, *Joint Stock Companies*, vol. 1, pp. 396-438, vol. III, pp. 298-360, L. Melville, *South Sea Bubble*. See also *Economic History Review*, vol. II., No. 7 (Jan. 1932), "The Bank of England and the South Sea Company," by R. D. Richards.

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The second group of entries under each chapter has been added in the second edition of this book, some of these additional entries would have appeared, but for the exigencies of printing, as foot-notes in the text and not among suggestions for further reading

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